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Near East & South Asia

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REGIONAL

UAE Official Criticizes GCC-EEC Trade Agreement

44040239 *Dubayy AL-BAYAN in Arabic* 12 May 88

[Text]

Sa'id ibn Ahmad al-'Utaybah, president of the UAE chambers of commerce and industry union and president of the Abu Dhabi chamber of commerce and industry, criticized the cooperation agreement between the Gulf states and the EEC describing it as an agreement of limited scope.

In an article published in yesterday's issue of the Abu Dhabi chamber of commerce and industry magazine, he wrote that the agreement which will be signed this coming June "opens the door for the conclusion of a more extensive trade agreement in the future."

He wrote that the agreement does not offer anything to the GCC. Besides, it deprives the GCC of its right of reciprocity by stripping it of the use of customs duties or protective measures as a weapon against EEC-manufactured imports. This is the only weapon in the hands of the GCC states, one which they have refrained from using in order to preserve good GCC-EEC relations.

Al-'Utaybah criticized Europe's inflexibility and its deliberate exaggeration of the effect of Gulf petrochemical exports to the EEC.

Al-'Utaybah also wrote that a careful study of the various aspects of GCC-EEC trade relations shows clearly that the claim which Europe circulates concerning a GCC petrochemical invasion is not based on objective fact, whether one considers the petrochemicals themselves or other aspects of the commercial process. He also explained that Gulf imports from the EEC form 15 percent of European-manufactured exports and 34 percent of Gulf imports, the total of which amounts to 15 billion dollars annually. Likewise, Gulf products cannot be a cause of the increase in European unemployment. On the contrary, the Gulf countries help to turn the wheels of European industry and aid in the reduction of European unemployment.

Al-'Utaybah indicated that the value of GCC exports to EEC states has declined due to the fact that the West intentionally reduced oil prices, increased its dependence on North Sea oil, economized in its oil consumption, and increased its dependence on alternative sources of energy.

Al-'Utaybah noted that the drop in oil prices has affected what the Europeans generally speak of as the competitiveness of Gulf petrochemicals. The fall in prices was

reflected in the production costs in Europe where some petrochemical products fell sharply from 270 dollars per ton to 90 dollars, while they remained 150 dollars in Saudi Arabia.

PALESTINIAN AFFAIRS

Palestinian Analyzes Attempts To "Jordanize" Jordan

44040234 *Jerusalem AL-BAYADIR AL-SIYASI in Arabic* 7 May 88 p 14

[Article: "Has Phase of Jordanian Indifference to Palestinian Issue Begun; In Whose Interest Is Step To "Jordanize" Jordan, and Why"]

[Text] What is Jordan's position in this phase? Is Jordan still as interested in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip as it was 2 years ago or has there been a change in its position? Numerous questions are raised regarding Jordan's true stance, especially in this sensitive phase and since King Husayn has made numerous statements asserting that Jordan has no influence over the bank and the strip and that this is a fact which he has actually experienced.

Numerous political analysts have recently noted that the Jordanian current prevalent in the 1974-82 period is the current prevailing at present, that this current calls for "Jordanizing" Jordan and for abandoning the bank and strip issue to the PLO and urges that no efforts be wasted on this issue. This is the current which prevailed in the wake of the 1974 Rabat summit. To put it more precisely, this means that the PLO and Jordan are not competing over the future of the bank and the strip and that Jordan is taking a political respite from following up on conditions in the bank and the strip. However, this does not mean estrangement but rather means that ordinary activities, such as the export of agricultural products, passport issues and payment of the salaries of active employees registered with the Jordanian government authorities, will continue. As for tackling political issues, following up on the situation and establishing influence in the bank and the strip, such activities are postponed, rather neglected. Even subsidization of the development plan may be frozen.

This current is presently led by Prime Minister Zayd al-Rifa'i and supported by Prince Hasan who believes firmly in the need to "Jordanize" Jordan or, in other words, the need to devote the attention to developing Jordan economically, politically and commercially.

Arrivals from Amman have asserted that this policy is ongoing and that the Palestinian living in Amman has begun to feel this change in Jordan's position—a change reflected in the appointment of government officials, in the acquisition of loans or in numerous facilities that are given to Jordanians and denied Palestinians.

Even though King Husayn is not in favor of such a concept and does not support such a current, he has permitted this current to move forward and has said in private statements and in public meetings that it is necessary to support the Jordanian citizen and to fully bolster the Jordanian procession so as to develop Jordan.

Another question that poses itself is: Will this current embrace resolutions that call for ousting Palestinian civil servants and workers and replacing them altogether by Jordanians?

Numerous circles don't believe that such a step will be taken because Jordan is eager not to provoke an issue needlessly, namely the issue of discrimination between Jordanians and Palestinians. If this issue grows and spreads it will give Jordan a bad image and it may provoke numerous sensitivities. However, the current trend is to fill new vacancies with Jordanians and to replace any retiring prominent official by a Jordanian.

Analysts sum up the reasons for the adoption of this step—"Jordanizing Jordan"—in the following:

Competing with the PLO in this period constitutes a major loss and weakens the Jordanian and Arab position, especially since Shultz has focused on snaring Jordan but has failed so far.

King Husayn's eagerness to have a clean record insofar as capitulationist solutions or other solutions which he does not consider to be just. He does not want to enter into endless labyrinths without achieving any accomplishments in the interest of just peace. He is aware of Israel's ill will and of the unwillingness of the Israeli side to give up land in return for peace. Moreover, King Husayn does not wish to undermine the political accomplishment he made nearly 6 months ago when he managed to get the Arabs together in the "accord and agreement" summit.

King Husayn does not wish to embroil Jordan in a conflict with the Arab countries over the issue of a joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation and does not wish to give anybody the opportunity to slander Jordan in this connection.

Jordan does not want the explosions that have occurred in Amman to recur, to be misunderstood or to be exaggerated because this may result in a domestic conflict. Such a conflict does not serve Jordan's interests at the present time.

Numerous circles have said that large numbers of Palestinians have been placed under precautionary detention to prevent the staging of demonstrations and the outbreak of riots. However, Arab and Palestinian efforts continue to be made to secure the release of these detainees.

There is no doubt that the fanatic religious current is strong in Amman. This is something that has to be taken into consideration because the Jordanian government has to pay greater attention to domestic affairs and to Jordanian national security than to any other issue.

Those close to King Husayn have said that the king himself has his reservations about this current but that he recently gave it the green light to carry on with its activities in order to safeguard Jordan's security and to protect Jordan from numerous attacks and incidents.

Well-connected sources have intimated that Jordan is preparing a comprehensive plan to resettle the Palestinian refugees because it wants to get rid of the refugee camps and that dozens of housing units have been prepared for the purpose. But Jordan's official sources have refused to confirm or deny these reports. These sources have, however, stressed that Jordan will seek to develop itself and to devote its attention to its numerous and diverse problems.

A final question must be asked, namely: Will this current truly serve Jordan or will it end Jordan's role in the political process and in the numerous movements?

This question cannot, of course, be answered now and one has to wait. But there are those who say that this current that seeks to Jordanize Jordan is given an opportunity in order to bolster the Jordanian role by having the Arabs and Palestinians ask Jordan not to wash its hands of the issue and to continue its efforts. This view is supported by some political observers and experts. Therefore, one may ask: Does Jordan know in advance that it will be asked not to wash its hands of the issue in case it adopts such positions?

Numerous questions with numerous answers, and speculation is inevitable. But what is more important is that one has to wait to find out the truth and the reality behind such a position.

08494

Damascus-based Leaders Discuss Implications of Uprising

44040229a London AL-TADAMUN
16-22 Apr 88 pp 19, 20

[Article by Zaynah Sharim: "Palestinian Leaders in Damascus Stress Their Refusal To Coexist With the Occupation and Predicted That the Day of Self-Determination and Independence is Imminent"]

[Text] The Palestinian Arab people's uprising in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip has become the event which has most attracted the concerns of Arab public opinion and the most prominent of the headlines on Arab and international events. With the continuation and escalation of this uprising, a kind of interaction has taken place between what have come to be known as "the

Palestinians of the diaspora" and "the Palestinians inside Israel." AL-TADAMUN turned to the Palestinian leaders who have adopted Damascus as headquarters for themselves and presented the following question to them: How do you view the uprising of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, in this great magnitude which has not come in being since the revolution of 1936? Where will this uprising lead and what can it achieve?

Col Muhammad Sa'id Musa (Abu-Musa), leader of the faction which split from the FATAH movement command and secretary of what is known as "the temporary command of the movement," Mr Khalid al-Fahum, former chairman of the Palestine National Council, Dr Samir Ghawshah, secretary general of the Palestinian Popular Struggle Front, and Mr 'Abd-al-Muhsin Abu-Mayzar, former member of the Palestine Liberation Organization's executive committee and a responsible figure in what is today known as the salvation front, whose headquarters are Damascus, answered AL-TADAMUN's question. Here are their answers to AL-TADAMUN's question:

A Correction of Notions

Col Abu-Musa:

It is true that the 1936 revolution was a prominent way-station along the road of the Palestinian struggle against the British mandate and the Jewish Zionist immigration which was flowing into the territory of Palestine. The goal of the 1936 revolution was to prevent the British mandate and Zionism from establishing the Zionist entity. However, after that revolution the Palestinian people continued to face the schemes of Britain and Zionism until 1948. In spite of the defeat and the reversal to which the Palestinian people succumbed that year, and we all realize its objective and subjective causes, our people did not cease struggling. The takeoff of the FATAH movement on 1 January 1965 took place, and, in spite of the blows which some people inflicted on the revolution, it continued to keep up the struggle. Domestically, the confrontation within the occupied territories did not cease after 1948, since the day of the land was a day observed by the Palestinian people in their rejection of the occupation and the expropriation of territory. The uprisings continued in the bank and the strip and did not stop, although they were not at the level of the uprising-revolution that is taking place now. That is all proof of our Palestinian people's adherence to their national identity and their failure to relinquish their right to Palestine, all of Palestine.

Where to, though? What will this revolution now achieve inside of Israel? We cannot impose more on it than what it is capable of, in terms of its demand for the attainment of full withdrawal from the territories occupied in 1967, or the liberation of Palestine from the occupation. It is enough that this uprising-revolution has brought the Palestine cause back to the position of centrality in international events and that it has corrected notions on

the struggle with the Zionist enemy being a struggle of existence and not a struggle of borders. It also has affirmed the refusal to coexist with the occupation and has proved the solidarity of the Palestinian people inside and outside occupied Palestine and therefore has broken the barrier of fear and shown the enemy in his true form, as an entity against which it is possible to realize domestic goals and which it is possible to destroy, as well, if there is an Arab strategy supplementing the goals and activity now taking place on the occupied territories. All these facts will constitute firm ground on which all the forces of the Palestine and Arab revolution may focus in order to draw up policies whose basis is confrontation and continuation of the struggle, and the possibility of achieving liberation and victory.

An Ongoing Uprising

Khalid al-Fahum:

All the members of the Palestinian people are carrying out the uprising on the occupied territories. As the members of the Palestinian people in the diaspora support this splendid uprising, they certainly hope for the unity of Palestinian ranks. However, the unity of Palestinian ranks abroad cannot be founded on unity of ranks without a unity of goal. Therefore we are working earnestly for the unity of ranks on the basis of the clear goal which is expressed in the Palestine national charter. As to where the uprising will lead, it is without a doubt a people's revolution which the people in the occupied nation are carrying out, and it has the goal of realizing comprehensive Israeli withdrawal from the Palestinian territories and the occupied Arab territories in the Golan and southern Lebanon. Therefore I assert that it will continue and escalate until this goal is achieved. As the question pointed out, it has been the greatest uprising and people's revolution since 1936. Our entire hope is fastened on the people in the occupied territory and their challenge of Zionist terrorism and arrogance. We on the outside must offer all support, all support in all political, material and military areas.

The Basis Is the Goal

Dr Samir Ghawshah:

The people's uprising in the occupied nation has underscored a group of facts, foremost among them the unity of the Palestinian people, with all their classes, social groups and political orientations, in confronting the Zionist occupation until unity takes place and the Palestinian people's firm national goals are realized. It has also asserted the unity of the people within and outside the occupied nation in the struggle for the sake of the right of return, self-determination and establishment of the independent Palestinian state. In spite of the continuation of our people's struggles since 1936, and the various forms and successive uprisings they have expressed, the present uprising has been characterized by features and signs which are distinctive from that which

came before, since it has been characterized by comprehensiveness, expansiveness, long range and the escalation of the ways and means of the confrontation against the Zionist occupation forces which have resorted to the most vicious forms of brutal repression because they have failed to put an end to it. Here the uprising has entered its fifth month and it is greater in terms of momentum.

The masses of our people in the occupied homeland have declared before the whole world their goal, that theirs is the uprising of a people who are holding fast to their cause and their national rights, rejecting coexistence with the occupation and all forms of solutions and bargaining, and determined to regain their firm national rights. On that basis, within the course the people's uprising has followed; it has realized a number of plans, among them:

First, the restoration of credit to the Palestine cause as the cause of a people struggling for their legitimate rights and restoration to the Palestine revolution of its combative fire, asserting that no security, no stability and no peace will come about by sidestepping the rights of the Palestinian people and their sole legitimate representative, the Palestine Liberation Organization.

Second, the uprising has confirmed that the cause of Palestine is the Arabs' central cause and that attempts to ignore it and trivialize it are a stance which contradicts that of the Arab masses, which throughout the Arab nation have asserted that Palestine has been and will remain the cause of every Arab citizen and that the Palestinian people constitute the spearhead in the confrontation of Zionist plans which are aimed at obliterating the cause.

Third, the uprising has imposed itself on the entire international community as the cause of a people facing occupation and are armed with rocks and firm will, as demonstrated by their children, young people, old men and women, in confronting the brutal Israeli instrument of repression, confounding all the errors in the media which had presented the Palestine cause as a cause of refugees or a cause of terrorists and saboteurs. Thus, the Palestine cause has come into every home in the world and penetrated all forms of blackout and the instrument of Zionist propaganda.

Fourth, the uprising has revealed the racist settler nature of the Zionist enemy's state (Israel) and the world has witnessed that what is alleged to be "the democracy of Israel" is a fraudulent mask, that racism in its vilest forms is being practiced against the Palestinian people and that the most minor human rights are being destroyed brutally before the eyes of the whole world.

Hope and Trust

'Abd-al-Muhsin Abu-Mayzar:

There is no doubt that the fierce people's uprising inside occupied Palestine, with its great combative momentum

and the participation of all the classes and groups of the people in it against the authorities of the Zionist occupation, has formed a quantum condition in the combative life of our people. An initial glance at the elements which set it off confirms to us that our Palestinian people within the occupied Palestinian territories are not isolated from political events, whether they are local, regional or international. Our Palestinian people have managed to store up their combative experiences and act on the theater of conflict through the series of strikes, uprisings, demonstrations and various forms of struggle against the Zionist enemy. These struggles have earned practical expertise for them in the management of their struggle, with the deep feeling that they cannot realize their full national goals through the simplest and most complex forms of struggle which led to the outbreak of the fierce people's uprising. The national forces inside and outside the occupied nation have been able seriously to see that the main task our Palestine Arab cause is facing lies in the occupied Arab territories themselves. Without getting the people on the inside moving and advancing the wheel of their struggle, the revolution will not be able to realize its goals. Without a doubt, the heroic uprising, with the sacrifices, acts of devotion and broad-scale successes it has formed, especially in the international context, has caused us to look at the future with great hope and confidence. All the liberals of the world have taken a stand on our side and on the side of national unity, which has been embodied on the territory of Palestine. Our Palestinian people have been concerned since the beginning of the uprising to raise principled slogans of unity affirming defense of the nation's territory and the embodiment of the spirit of the Palestinian struggle, because out of the daily acts of sacrifice which many martyrs and wounded people are passing through, our people, deprived of arms, are facing the most modern Israeli repressive weapons and the most modern techniques of terror by which the authorities of the enemy have been supplied by the United States of America. Therefore the uprising constitutes the unity of objective, of destiny and of the Palestinian and Arab future alike. It will consolidate the importance of routing the occupation without restriction or condition from all Palestinian and occupied Arab territories, having the people who have fallen away return to their homes and their possessions and having our people empowered with their rights of self-determination and of building their independent country. The tour by David Miller, the British minister for foreign affairs, in the occupied territories, when the uprising was still in its first days, affirmed that there is a great Israeli lie about what is called "democracy" in the Zionist entity. The British minister shed much light on this type of fraudulent democracy which in reality is a fascist dictatorship of a new type. It is not different from the Nazi techniques which were followed in World War Two against the peoples of Europe and the Soviet Union and what the racist minority in South Africa is practicing. The tour by Marak Gouldning, the assistant secretary general of the United Nations, to occupied Palestine, his visit to Jerusalem, Nabulus, the Gaza Strip and the other Palestinian

towns, and his listening to the people suffering from the occupation have also come to confirm that what is going on in occupied Palestine is not disturbances and vandalism carried out by some young people. The truth which holds that what is going on on the bank and in the strip is a comprehensive revolutionary people's uprising which a people who have been suffering from Israeli terrorism and repression over many years are carrying out has been made manifest. It is a comprehensive historic people's referendum against the occupation and for return, self-determination and independence. The uprising has asserted that the authorities of the Zionist occupation have now come to suffer international, regional and local isolation and feel that they are facing a people who are determined to return, liberate their occupied national soil and wrest their firm usurped national rights and their national independence. In this context, also, the report of the secretary general of the United Nations, Mr De Cuellar, was made, describing the vile state the occupation authorities are using in the form of methods of repression, terrorism, expulsion, imprisonment of women and children and the killing of many of them. It stresses the importance of applying the 1949 Geneva agreement, of commitment to the international charter of human rights and of considering the Palestine cause the essence of the Middle East crisis. However, the American veto in the Security Council against the draft resolution supported by the report of the United Nations secretary general has once again underlined the United States' grievous role of standing against our Palestinian people and their legitimate rights and consequently standing against the Liberation Organization as our people's sole legitimate representative. In summary, one can say that our people's heroic uprising has embodied the will of the Palestinian people and their determination to get rid of the Zionist occupation and its hostile, settler expansionist practices. The uprising, with its direct and indirect goals and its continuous perseverance, will give our people in their combative struggles a new revolutionary dynamism on the road to the attainment of their fixed national goals, foremost among which are their right of return, self-determination and establishment of their independent country on Palestinian national soil.

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EGYPT

Deputy Prime Minister Discusses Relations With Opposition

45040115B London AL-HAWADITH in Arabic
29 Apr 88 pp 33-34

[Interview with Deputy Prime Minister Dr Yusuf Wali by Usamah 'Ajjaj; in Cairo, date not specified]

[Excerpts] After the national dialogue between the ruling National Party and the opposition parties in Egypt was discontinued and the emergency law was extended for 3 years, and in the wake of reported differences between

the two ruling party factions—differences which came to light in the form of confrontations in People's Assembly sessions between some party deputies and certain ministers—several questions have been raised in the political arena: Was the call for a national dialogue a smoke screen for the government's intention to extend the emergency law, as the opposition is claiming these days as part of its endeavors to step up its objection to this extension? And will these—alleged—differences within the ruling party lead to a new cabinet reshuffle? This is notwithstanding President Mubarak's denial of this "rumor" persistently circulating in the opposition press.

These and other questions were behind the interview AL-HAWADITH conducted with Dr Yusuf Wali, Egyptian deputy prime minister and minister of agriculture and secretary general of the National Democratic Party.

[Question] Do you think that the national dialogue between the NDP and the opposition parties can be continued, now that the opposition's condition that the emergency law be rescinded has been turned down?

[Answer] Continuing the dialogue between the NDP and the opposition parties is a political necessity. Within the framework of national affiliation that transcends any partisan ones, we find that the possibilities of the dialogue expanding and developing are great, as confirmed by previous rounds. Our differences over issues should not lead to a breakoff in the dialogue, especially if the issue is related to ways and means to which the dialogue is connected, within the context of the objectives that bring us together. We are all agreed upon this. Our parties in Egypt are a reflection of the Egyptian people's homogeneity, and although resumption of the dialogue is contingent on the free will of all parties concerned, my confidence in everybody's national motives leads me to say that the dialogue among the Egyptian parties will continue.

[Question] Don't you think that bringing two cases before the Egyptian judiciary—one pertaining to the Nasirists, "Egypt's Revolution," and the second to the religious current (attempted assassination of Abu Pasha, al-Nabawi Isma'il, Makram Muhammad Ahmad)—raises an important question about the reason behind denying these forces their legitimacy? And don't you think that had these forces had their own parties, such practices, marked by violence, would have been thwarted?

[Answer] Democratic experiences in past years underscored the fact that the existing parties have guaranteed all the various political currents in our country the freedom and ability to pursue a political life in a way commensurate with their size. As for the tendency toward violence and extremism, it has its motives that are unrelated to the absence of a party to absorb such

violence. Our contemporary political history is replete with facts that attest to that. Indeed, it is unfair to hold these organizations accountable for allegories and slogans they raise.

Notwithstanding my aforementioned belief that the existing parties are capable of embracing all political currents in Egypt, I do not deny any political current its right to form an independent party, for this is guaranteed under the law and is governed by regulations adopted by parties exercising their role in our political life at present.

[Question] Who is responsible for freezing NDP action, particularly in the wake of freezing the activities of certain leaders (Mustafa Khalil, Hilmi al-Hadidi, Mustafa al-Sa'id)? And why not reconsider the matter of forming a political bureau and also that of the governorate secretaries?

[Answer] The allegation that NDP action has been frozen is totally inconsistent with the facts, for National Party organizations, be they committees or secretariats at the central or regional level, have made effective and significant contributions to the discussion and ratification of the plan's pivotal points. Moreover, these organizations are proceeding with their discussions of National Party issues at the national and mass level, communicating their recommendations both to the executive branch and parliament. The political club experiment, whereby the presidents of the People's Assembly, the chairman of the Shura Council and the prime minister meet with party members twice a month—and the president keeps up with these meetings by attending some of them to conduct a democratic dialogue over domestic and foreign issues—has been in effect carried over to the governorate secretariats. These meetings, attended by the governors and some ministers, focus their discussions on regional issues.

[Question] Don't you think that the conflicts that emerged in the People's Assembly between National Party deputies—to be exact—and the ministers of supply and tourism underscore the fact that the NDP is disintegrating from within and does not speak the same language and does not have the same orientation?

[Answer] Conflicts occasionally cropping up in parliament are natural to parliamentary practice, but are always the exception. For the many different judgments expressed in our meetings notwithstanding, we do agree on the final courses adopted at the end of the debate. The rule is to adopt these courses either inside or outside parliament. One positive indicator is the fact that conflicts cropping up in parliament over certain issues are discussed further on the same day with the same parties at the National Party office to eliminate their causes, clarify positions, and effect an agreement.

[Question] Do you agree with reports that conflicting currents representing the far right and certain leftist factions exist within the National Party? What is the proper course for the party? And what about the struggle among these currents?

[Answer] The National Party represents the centrist current, one that is deep-rooted in Egyptian political life and not a product of a struggle between the right and the left. Indeed, it has its geographic, historic, economic, and cultural roots in our country. Heated discussions and constructive democratic dialogue during our meetings always focus on ways and means which cannot possibly create contradictions and struggles. Difference of opinion is likely and healthy within the framework I have already stated. As for struggles, they are essentially a luxury inconsistent with the conditions in our country or with the moderation that rules our intellectual scope.

[Question] Do you agree that political action in Egypt is going through a period of stagnation, and do you believe that the parties are the blame for this, or is the National Party to blame? And can this state of stagnation be overcome?

[Answer] Political action in Egypt, be it by the National Party or the opposition, cannot be described as stagnant. What we are trying to do presently through a dialogue with the parties is effect a greater link between political action and urgent national and mass issues. This course the National Party is following has been underscored by the topics the party has brought up for discussion: high prices, unemployment, economic remedies, education and housing. When the masses see that their problems, concerns, and aspirations are the parties' foremost concern, public participation in political action is greatly enhanced. This is the mainstay of a thriving democratic life.

12502

Foreign Minister Discusses Current Issues
45040115A Cairo AKHIR SA'AH in Arabic
13 Apr 88 p 14

[Interview with Foreign Minister 'Isma't 'Abd-al-Majid by Qamar Shah Dhu-al-Fiqar: in Cairo, date not specified]

[Excerpts] What are the prospects of Egyptian-Sudanese cooperation in the next stage? Can Egyptian-Tunisian relations be linked to the fate of the Arab League headquarters? What progress has been made in the Tabá issue through arbitration? And what about the trips American Secretary of State Shultz is undertaking for the sake of a just peace through an international conference, amid the Palestinian uprising in the occupied territories that has caused a shift in attitudes toward the cause in the American and international arenas? Finally, what

have Egyptian women accomplished in the diplomatic field and how can their experience, which has allowed them to hold ambassadorial posts, be assessed?

Dr 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid, deputy prime minister and minister of foreign affairs, answered the above questions during an interview AKHIR SA'AH conducted with him before he left with an official delegation, headed by Prime Minister 'Atif Sidqi, for the Sudan to firm up Egyptian-Sudanese relations.

About Egyptian-Sudanese relations, Dr 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid said: "The visit of the Egyptian delegation, headed by Prime Minister 'Atif Sidqi, underscores the strong advanced relations between the two fraternal countries, relations that are indeed enduring and everlasting. Frankly, no two countries enjoy the kind of strong relations that exist between Egypt and the Sudan. Solidarity between us and the Sudan is a necessity for the benefit of both peoples. Everything that tarnished our relations in certain fleeting moments in the past was nothing but a summer cloud that lifted all by itself, for we are truly one family."

About the shortfall in flood waters, he said: "This issue has not been raised with our brother the Sudan. By and large, it is a matter of less rain falling on the Ethiopian Plateau, the main source of the Nile water. Our share of the water is governed by a special agreement concluded in 1959. Now, all indications point to a near settlement of the flood water shortage problem because studies confirm the start of heavy rainfalls on the Ethiopian Plateau."

[Question] What about the Arab League headquarters, in view of the advanced fraternal Egyptian-Tunisian relations?

[Answer] Our relations with our sister Tunis are extremely good; and due to our desire to maintain them at this level in terms of form and content, we do not want to raise the question of the illegality of moving the league's headquarters at the present time. Frankly, this is no cause for alarm whatsoever because the solution is very simple, for we base our position on the legality of the league's headquarters. From the political point of view, this is the framework that should be used in discussing the league's headquarters issue.

[Question] What about Taba's future? What is Egypt's position in the court of arbitration?

[Answer] Taba is Egyptian land one hundred percent, and Egypt will not give it up even though it is one square kilometer in area. Everyone knows that we have moved the problem from the negotiation stage to the arbitration stage. We have chosen arbitration because a solution via arbitration is binding upon both parties. A solution via conciliation is a political procedure, while arbitration is a legal one.

[Question] What progress has the American initiative made through George Shultz's trips to the Middle East to settle the Palestinian question through a just peace? And what impact has the uprising had on American policy in particular and global policy in general?

[Answer] The Palestinian uprising has shifted all international balances and has changed international attitudes toward the cause, in the United States in particular. The uprising has succeeded in changing American public and official opinion, as evidenced by Secretary of State George Shultz's shuttle trips, notwithstanding Shamir's rejection of all peace efforts, including the American ones.

The Palestinian uprising has clearly revealed a schism between popular and official opinions in Israel.

Regarding Egypt's active role in supporting the uprising and setting in motion the matter of holding an international conference with Palestinian representation, Dr 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid said:

"First of all, notwithstanding the differences that surfaced in Egypt's relations with the PLO during the Algiers conference in particular, we believe that the PLO is the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people under the leadership of an honorable man like Yasir 'Arafat, who is most intent on settling the issue of a Palestinian state.

"Egypt does not spare any efforts, however hard and arduous, in supporting the uprising and in finding a just settlement for the holders of the cause through an international conference.

"The uprising has demonstrated that, contrary to Israeli allegations, the inhabitants of the occupied territories in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip reject occupation. I liken the uprising to the October War, for it has moved the cause from one state to another and, at this stage, it is essential that an international peace conference will be held."

One last question I would like to raise: Now that the Americans are talking with Palestinian leaders, and George Shultz is talking about exchanging land for peace and implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 242 calling for withdrawal from the occupied territories, don't these developments serve the Palestinian cause in the wake of the uprising?

[Question] What about the future of Egyptian labor in Arab and foreign countries?

[Answer] Egyptian labor abroad, by and large, is a healthy phenomenon. It is a testimony to the need for Egyptian expertise and labor. I look upon them as honorable citizens seeking a livelihood while preserving Egypt's dignity. We encourage them fully, and Egypt's policy is to maintain ties between the mother country

and Egyptian expatriates. Egyptian embassies have a responsibility to take care of them and solve their problems within the sovereignty of the country in which they work.

[Question] How do you assess the work of Egyptian women in the diplomatic field?

[Answer] There are close to 100 women working in the diplomatic corps in the Egyptian foreign ministry and our embassies abroad, from attaches all the way up to ambassadors. I am delighted that women are working in the diplomatic field.

Regarding the diplomacy of development, Dr 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid concluded his talk by saying:

"The diplomacy of development may be summed up in obtaining grants and aid, transferring modern technology and obtaining training grants to enhance the efficacy of development in Egypt."

12502

Canal Authority Reports Revenues, Planned Improvements
45000096 *Cairo EGYPTIAN GAZETTE in English*
1 Jun 88 p 2

[Text] Next Sunday marks the 11th anniversary of the reopening of the Suez Canal to international navigation, after being closed for eight years in the wake of the June 1967 war. In the first months of this year, revenue from the Suez Canal amounted to \$531,400,000 showing an increase of \$30 million over revenue in the first months of last year. Negotiations are currently taking place between the Suez Canal Authority and the Arab Development Fund to contribute to the second stage of improving the Canal, which will cost \$700 million. Work on the canal will last for four years. The Authority has signed an accord with Egyptian companies which work in the Red Sea area, to repair the Authority's ships. The Authority's sources revealed that an accord worth L.E. 3.5 million was signed recently between the Suez Canal and a consortium of Dutch companies, which specialize in protecting coasts and navigational routes, to improve the northern and middle parts of the Canal by using new technical methods. The 3 km-long scheme will be implemented over 8 months, after which the Authority will have the right to apply the same methods to other sections of the Canal without the assistance of the Dutch companies. The Suez Canal Authority expects an increase in revenue from the Canal to reach more than \$1,300 million especially after persuading giant ships to use the Canal instead of sailing round the Cape of Good Hope, in return for paying reduced tolls.

Lake Nasir Water Level Drop, Poor Procedure Lower Fish Production

45000095 *Cairo AL-SHA'B in Arabic* 24 May 88 p 1

[Text] In cooperation with Japanese experts, Egyptian experts are exerting intensified efforts to save the fish in Lake Nasr from the greatly decreased flow of water due to the fact that production has decreased to only 12,000 tons, whereas it had been 43,000 tons before. In addition, the experts explained to AL-SHA'B that failure to follow scientific methods in breeding and fishing is among the causes for the decline in fish production.

Water for Summer Crops, Land Reclamation Deemed Sufficient

Increased Irrigation for Rice, Summer Crops
45000094 *Cairo AL-AKHBAR in Arabic* 22 May 88 p 7

[Report by Karimah al-Saruj]

[Text] Engineer Halil 'Umar, undersecretary for water distribution and irrigation allotment affairs in the Ministry of Public Works and Water Resources, has affirmed that the Ministry of Public Works has begun to increase the water output from Aswan in anticipation of planting rice and summer crops.

It was decided to increase irrigation water allotments in all of the governorates by gradually increasing the water 5 million cubic meters per day until the water reaches 225 million cubic meters per day at the end of June.

Engineer Halil 'Umar made it clear that this increase will provide plenty of irrigation water for all crops with no problems.

In addition, this will lead to a successful summer planting season until it is over at the end of June. After that, water output will begin to decrease during July, so that the Nile level will not drop below 150 cubic meters in the High Dam lake, thus keeping the High Dam turbines functioning until the end of July.

Water for Land Reclamation in Sinai
45000094 *Cairo AL-AHRAM in Arabic* 21 May 88 p 10

[Text] Engineer 'Isam Radi, minister of public works and water resources, has stated that the amounts of ground water in the al-'Uwaynat area are enough to reclaim and cultivate 186,000 feddans. This is to provide proper consumption of ground water in the area and ensures its flow in an organized manner in harmony with the needs of the agriculture and population in the area.

The minister explained that, currently, he is precisely determining the ground water reserves in the Sinai by digging ten experimental wells in various areas to reach the deep strata in the ground to determine the amount and nature of the water and how to benefit from it for agriculture, industry, and residential needs in the Sinai.

Minister 'Isam Radi indicated that water reserves in al-Wadi al-Jadid are enough to safely reclaim and cultivate 143,000 feddans, of which 43,000 feddans could be irrigated by the Nile, and that the Ministry of Public Works and Water Resources is currently studying possibilities to regain control over the al-Wadi al-Jadid area, transferring it from its current affiliation with the Ministry of Land Reclamation so that the water provision programs and plans in al-Wadi al-Jadid can be completed.

IRAQ

Book Discusses Psyche, Moral of Iraqis, Iranians *44040211a Baghdad AL-IRAQ in Arabic 10 Apr 88 p 3*

[Article by 'Abdallah al-Lami: "Perusing the Book, 'The Conspiracy against Iraq and Defense of the Eastern Gateway'"]

[Excerpts] Mr al-Khalidi set out to analyze in the first chapter of his book the major delusion under which Khomeyni's followers have been laboring in seeking to overthrow Saddam Husayn, the leader who has become a shining symbol of the new Iraq and a source of pride for Iraqis and for the Arab masses everywhere.

Mr al-Khalidi touched upon the chances the enemies took when they bet on the role their clients would play inside the country. The enemies placed their bets on sectarianism, on a weak sense of national unity, and on a weak domestic front in Iraq. They wagered against the cohesiveness of the Iraqi army. They took the chance that morale in the armed forces would be poor and that Iraqi citizens would become dispirited and disheartened as the war dragged on. They bet that Iraq's economy would collapse. They bet that Iran's numerical superiority over Iraq would enable them to win the war. Iran's population is three times that of Iraq. The Iranians placed their bets on Khomeyni's speeches and appeals to Iraqis and on the Iranian media in general, relying on them to create disturbances in Iraqi society. They thought such disturbances would help them achieve victory, occupy Iraq and control the country.

Mr al-Khalidi did well when he spotlighted the chances Khomeyni's followers had taken and relied upon. None of these bets paid off. Mr al-Khalidi also did well by spotlighting President Saddam Husayn's role. It was the president's intelligence and his great personality and creative abilities that made victory over our enemy possible. Mr al-Khalidi spotlighted the Iraqi people's strength, steadfastness, and pride, pointing out that Iraqis are experienced fighters, willing to make sacrifices to defend their country and their principles.

[Passage omitted in which the author recounts an incident portrayed in al-Khalidi's book describing the defense minister risking his life on the battlefield to protect Saddam Husayn during an Iraqi army retreat.

The author states that this incident confirms the willingness of every Iraqi soldier to lay his life on the line to defend his leader, his country, its citizens, its revolutionary gains and its future.]

Mr al-Khalidi explains why our great Iraq scored victories against the criminal, Zionist Iranian enemy. He explains how Iraqi patriotism endured and gained ground during the years of the war. The war gave birth to a new Iraqi citizen who destroyed all conventional equations and emerged as an invincible force in the turbulent challenges which Iraq faced. Chief among those challenges was the evil challenge from Iran.

This new Iraqi citizen, whose achievements are outstanding, is one who fights for prosperity and manifests Iraq's new reality, all its intellectual heritage, and its social and psychological cohesion. He represents the revolution's heart and mind as well as its vigilant eye and strong arm.

Observers did not think it was possible to achieve victory in the battle for development and also in the battle which Iraqis were fighting to defend the country. They believed that fighting two battles at the same time would be difficult. And yet, Saddam Husayn's smart leadership policy guaranteed conditions for Iraq's success, the success which eluded many countries. In most cases development and construction gave way. Giving up on development was the price which had to be paid to confront challenges and protect the country from danger. And yet, Iraq managed to overcome that with its determination to continue working for development, even as it continued to fight and to defend the country. The condition that ensued is somewhat special inasmuch as it may be considered a model which others may follow. It confirmed the Iraqi people's attachment to their revolution, their party, and their leader. Such an attachment astonished observers who found that, contrary to all conventional expectations, the Iraqi people became more determined as the years of the war went by. Their resolve, their power, and their ability to achieve victory grew. The Iraqi people upheld an equation which seemed untenable when they continued to fight with one hand and build their country with the other.

The author then talked about a variety of rich lessons which can be learned from the war. He talked about the Iraq citizens' awareness and knowledge and the extent to which Iraqis have rallied behind their leaders and responded to them. He talked about the confidence Iraqi citizens have in their leaders and the people's ability to remain steadfast and cohesive. He talked about the people's ability to strengthen their national unity and foil all plans to undermine it. The author declared that the war had shown from the very beginning that the Khomeyni regime was failing and that its deceptive slogans had missed their mark. He said that Khomeynism was no longer that decisive and uncontested influence in Iran. Instead, it is now being plagued with infighting at a time when it is facing strong opposition and a fierce

fight. Khomeynism, which is being challenged daily in a variety of ways, seems also to be getting weaker every day against the opposition's forces. Thus, it is now possible to describe what is happening in Iran today by saying that it is "a grinding civil war" which is likely to develop and grow quickly.

Victory over their tormentors and persecutors is the only thing tormented Iranians need. That is why they will continue to disappoint their leaders' dreams for victory over Iraq because they have no interest in such a victory. The people of Iran cannot continue to fuel a war which the dominant mullas want and are using to cover up their chicanery and deception.

Although victory for great Iraq in this war may be attributable to numerous factors, a simple comparison between the Iranian regime and the revolutionary state of Iraq, which is strong and stable, will show that whereas the Iranian regime has to deal with the hatred Iranians feel for it, the revolutionary state of Iraq can boast of its people who are aware and cognizant. They rallied behind their leaders, loudly proclaiming their message for progress and peace.

It has become evident that the Khomeyni regime is an extension of those ambitious designs which Persian regimes have harbored against the Arab nation. It is a carbon copy of the aggressive method and foreign policy followed by the Shah's regime in its reliance on paid agents and its service to foreign interests. Some of the characteristics, though, have been changed to accommodate the cunning and deceptive slogans which were proclaimed. It is also obvious at the same time that the Khomeyni regime's domestic policy is a carbon copy of the Shah's. And here too the characteristics and the slogans have been changed. Just as the Shah's people did, Khomeyni's people are using a tough, iron-fisted approach to guarantee their survival in power. They confronted Iranians with oppression and terror, mass executions, prisons, and detention camps. Although they relied on the systems used by the Shah to carry out their bloodthirsty, repressive operations, they also added to those systems their very own horrible methods, outdoing the previous regime with the horrible measures they employed. They forced the country into backwardness and imposed reactionary attitudes on the people. They also outdid the previous regime in its efforts to accumulate wealth and fortune at the expense of the powerless and the oppressed who, Khomeyni's followers claim, they came to power to rescue.

Conditions are so bad that the Iranian people, who are suffering under the gloomy and hateful rule of the mullas, are now crying for the good old days even though they had suffered much under the Shah's regime.

Khomeynism has stumbled and fallen into the same hole which the Shah's regime fell into. It is a deep hole from which there can be no escape. It is a hole that Khomeyni's followers dug themselves: a hole they dug with

their hands, which are stained by the blood of their own people. That hole was forged by their thoughtless policy which stemmed from their evil, ambitious designs and their aggressive tendency, neither of which is directly compatible with the hopes and aspirations of their oppressed people who had looked forward to freedom and progress after getting rid of the Shah's regime. Instead, the Iranian people found themselves held in the grip of this irresponsible, backward crowd which turned out to be more domineering and more frightening than the Shah's people.

08592

ISRAEL

Diplomatic Clashes With South Africa Seen Linked to Peres

44000097 Durban THE DAILY NEWS in English
10 May 88 p 14

[Article by Peter Allen-Frost: "Relations With Israel May Improve"]

[Text] South African relations with Israel might take a turn for the better after this country goes to the polls this year and there might be a distinct upswing in a matter of weeks.

Many of the bilateral problems in the diplomatic sphere began when Shimon Peres took over the Foreign Ministry and his chief aide, Josef Beilin, became Political Director-General. Beilin is an outspoken critic of South Africa and spearheaded a series of measures that resulted in Israeli sanctions against the country.

If the Israeli Labour Party puts Beilin in a viable position to be elected to the Knesset (parliament) when polls are held, then Beilin will leave the Foreign Ministry in July, said a government official.

Another staunch opponent of South African policies, Allon Liel, worked under Beilin as head of the South African desk. Liel leaves his post to become Foreign Ministry spokesman, also in July.

Replacements for Liel and Beilin have not been decided upon yet. It is possible their posts will be left vacant until after the elections and a new foreign minister takes over.

The way the country's public opinion polls are running now, it looks as though Prime Minister Shamir's Likud party will squeak in by a narrow majority and form a coalition government without Labour. That probably means a more kindly approach to Pretoria, without supporting apartheid policies yet more overall sympathy for its diplomatic position.

Another factor in the equation is Pretoria's decision to appoint a new ambassador to Israel, Mr Johannes Viljoen, scheduled to take up his post here also in July.

The incumbent ambassador, Mr Anton Loubser, will be reposted to Denmark.

Mr Loubser clashed with Beilin and Alon several times, most notably when he criticized Israel's Cabinet decision to change official policy to South Africa, a policy drafted by Beilin.

Last September Mr Loubser said in a newspaper interview that the decision to low-profile relations with South Africa did not reflect the will of the Israeli people, who liked and sympathised with South Africa.

Since that time relations have been strained between the Foreign Ministry in Jerusalem and the South African Embassy in Tel Aviv.

Newspapers reported here that Mr Loubser had been boycotted by the Foreign Ministry.

A ministry official told me: "That's not so. We addressed all our invitations to the ambassador as usual, but since September he has not responded. The senior minister at the embassy always came in his stead."

When the news of Mr Loubser's transfer came up, there were apparent leaks to the Israeli Press, which hinted that it was the contretemps with the Foreign Ministry that had persuaded Pretoria to replace Mr Loubser.

This was denied by embassy officials here, who insisted Mr Loubser was caught up in a general reshuffle in the Department of Foreign Affairs.

Yet despite the official Israeli policies of keeping South African relations in the background, many other ministries have quite happy and open relationships with Pretoria. Trade appears to be flourishing.

An Israeli businessman who returned from South Africa last week said: "Everybody seems to be doing business there except the Americans, who cut off their nose to spite their face."

And trying to get a ticket on SAA from Israel to South Africa this summer means standing in line and then hoping there's room. The planes are packed with businessmen and Israeli tourists.

08309

JORDAN

Information Minister Defends Censorship Policy, News Role

44040235 London AL-MAJALLAH in Arabic
18-24 May 88 pp 20-21

[Interview With Dr Hani al-Khasawinah, Jordan's Minister of Information, by Nura Fakhuri in Amman, Date not Given]

[Excerpts] Amman—Jordan's information policy was the focus of the western press last week in the wake of the decision to expel the correspondent of the American

NBC television network and to stop two Jordanian reporters from writing for foreign papers. Dr Hani al-Khasawinah, Jordan's minister of information, has said that this firm decision was painful to him but inevitable within the framework of the delicate phase being undergone by the area generally and by Jordan in particular.

In Amman, AL-MAJALLAH has interviewed Dr al-Khasawinah who, before becoming minister of information, held several diplomatic positions, including those of Jordan's ambassador to Paris and Moscow and, previously, to Damascus. It discussed with him Jordan's information policy, the Jordanian working paper, the special summit and the West Bank and Gaza Strip uprising and its impact on the Jordanian media. Here are the details of the interview:

[Question] The decision made last week to expel Rick Davis, a reporter of the NBC television network, and to stop two Jordanian female journalists from writing for foreign papers has provoked reactions in western media circles. Is this a new pattern in Jordan's information policy? What motivated the adoption of such a firm decision?

[Answer] Our decision to expel Rick Davis was motivated by several reasons. Previously, this reporter engaged in acts that do not indicate upright journalistic ethics. He had clashed with Jordanian information officials even though we are an open country, probably one of the few Arab countries in the area that open their doors in such a manner to foreign journalists who can contact, consult with and interview all the officials. Insofar as these foreign journalists are concerned, the Ministry of Information's role is confined to providing them with facilities.

We in the ministry treat the foreign journalist exactly as we treat the Jordanian journalist. What is more, foreign journalists are entitled to enroll in the Union of Jordanian Journalists. To my knowledge, the problems with Davis started when King Husayn gave an interview to an American press reporter. All of us, from the minister of information to the minister of the royal court, were surprised to receive a harshly-worded letter of protest unbefitting a journalist objecting to the fact that the king had given his interview not to Davis but to another U.S. reporter.

The second problem developed during U.S. Secretary of State George Shultz' visit. Jordan's security authorities had taken the security measures ordinarily taken on similar occasions and had designated a special place for photographers. Davis had with him a photographer who strayed from the designated place. A Jordanian security officer was compelled to return this photographer to his place with utter politeness. Davis and Samirah Qa'war, a Jordanian female correspondent who works with him, claimed that the security authorities abused the photographer working for the NBC—who happened to be an

Egyptian—for the sole reason that he was an Arab, saying that if he was an American, the security authorities would not have treated him in this manner. In an investigation, it became evident that the photographer had not been mistreated at all. We again pointed out this to Davis. It is worth noting that throughout Jordan's history, Davis is the only reporter to be expelled from the country. But Davis' true hostility to Jordan and to the Arab cause was demonstrated in a program shown by NBC three weeks ago. This program was aimed at U.S. public opinion that has been shaken by Israel's acts of aggression against the Arab Palestinian people. This public began to change its opinion of Israel after witnessing the violations to which the Israeli occupation has subjected women, children and old men and after being shocked by the true Israel that has been maltreating and fighting children and women for months. Through the said program, Davis tried to distort the uprising and failed to say a single word closely or remotely connected with the Israeli practices. Davis' sole message was that the party persecuting the Palestinians is Jordan. The message he wished to convey to the U.S. public opinion was that both Israel and Jordan are equal in persecuting the Palestinians.

An example of the lies contained in the program is Davis' allegation that the soccer team of al-Wahdat Palestinian Refugee Camp played a match with and beat the Armed Forces Club team and that as a result, according to Davis, the Jordanian authorities withdrew the name of the al-Wahdat team and changed it. The fact is that there has never been a match between al-Wahdat Club and the Armed Forces Club. This is one of the simplest examples of the lies presented to the U.S. public opinion—lies that depict Jordan as hostile to the Palestinian identity and as a party seeking to efface this identity. The fact is that we support the Palestinian identity and we try to highlight it. Our press, our media and our policy, beginning with the king and ending with any Jordanian ambassador, is devoted to caring for and defending the Palestinian cause. Our permanent UN delegate speaks of nothing but the Palestinian cause because we and the Palestinian people have interwoven relations and ties. We are a single people.

False Message

[Question] It seems that Davis tried to give the impression that Jordan wants to devour the Palestinian issue?

[Answer] Even worse. For five months, the American people have been seeing that the party strangling the Palestinians is Israel. Then Davis comes to indirectly tell the Americans in his message: O ye Americans sympathizing with the Palestinian people, Israel is not the only party persecuting the Palestinians. There is Jordan also. Thus, the Americans forget the Israeli acts of persecution.

[Question] Did he not mention any other Arab country?

[Answer] No. With strange cunning and malice, he clearly focused on Jordan. We were then surprised by the western reaction to what had occurred, especially to the Jordanian female journalist who was cooperating with Davis (Samirah Qa'war) and to Lamis Anduni, a colleague of Qa'war's. We were surprised by this media interest at a time when the United States shut down the PLO's information office in its entirety, without a single voice rising to denounce or condemn this decision.

[Question] What is Lamis Anduni's role in this issue?

[Answer] Regrettably, Lamis Anduni and Samirah Qa'war have presented truncated facts to western public opinion. Consequently, this decision had to be made in order to end the distortion.

[Question] Some media circles have interpreted the invitation King Husayn extended to the western press representatives two weeks ago and the press conference in which he defined Jordan's viewpoint as part of [Jordan's response to the west's] reaction?

[Answer] The king's meeting with the foreign reporters is an annual tradition. On the occasion of the month of Ramadan, the king gives fast-breaking banquets. The king met with the Jordanian journalists 20 days ago and invited the foreign press reporters last week.

[Question] In the wake of what has happened recently, will the sensitive conditions being undergone by the area lead to the adoption of censorship measures against foreign reporters?

[Answer] The first thing I did after being appointed minister of information was to entreat the king and the prime minister to lift the ban that had been imposed on some journalists. I received today a cable informing me that (Brathlid) Silver has been appointed as the new NBC reporter. I welcome him, as I welcome any foreign reporter. No special measure will be taken. The more ebullient the area becomes, the more open will Jordan's doors be to our brother and sister Arab and foreign journalists. Let them come and talk to whomever they wish to talk to.

Media and Uprising

[Question] Since the start of the uprising in the bank and the strip, some Arab ministries of information have tried to devote a part of their activities to bolstering this uprising. Has the Jordanian Ministry of Information prepared special programs on this issue or do you follow a special information policy to bolster this uprising?

[Answer] The uprising is our main information concern for several reasons. Every Arab has been stirred by the uprising. The greatest thing about the uprising is that it highlights the Arab man's ability to challenge the darkest and most difficult circumstances. The uprising reflects the image of the Jordanian, the Syrian, the Iraqi, the

Egyptian, the Algerian, the Saudi and the Yemeni. This is the pan-Arab aspect we see through this uprising. Moreover, the uprising is our cause. We and the Palestinian people are the two Arab peoples closest to each other. We are a single family. An Arab who is not stirred by the Palestinian people's steadfastness is not an Arab. For all these reasons, the uprising is the main topic of our press, our broadcasting stations and our information. But we are proud that our media are governed by both emotion and responsibility. We are aware of the immensity of the Arab-Israeli conflict. We are aware of the power, of the U.S. support for and of the western alliance with Israel as we are aware of the simple Palestinian people's endeavors and of the prevalent Arab state of division. Inasmuch as we are aware that this uprising is for us, we are also aware of the responsibility of the guided Arab media that addresses the Arab intellect, that impresses upon this intellect the importance of Arab solidarity and that informs the Arab citizen that the international powers are now living in an era of detente, that they wish in this era to settle the regional conflicts peacefully and that within this equation, we must try to gain as many of our rights as possible.

[Question] Some fault the Jordanian media for their "Americanization," meaning that these media support the U.S. Middle East policy, keeping in mind what you have already said about the harm done the Arab world through the continued U.S. support for Israel. What is your response to such censure?

[Answer] I hold myself above responding to such censure. We are a country that has experienced injustice. The U.S. lackeys and the foreigners' lackeys in the region are well known. The Jordanians' responsiveness to their Arab nation's sacred causes, such as the cause of Arab unity, is well known and attested to. A part of the conspiracy experienced by the Arab nation began by misrepresenting and sullyng Jordan's name and true image. Who believes that this country—which is small in resources, which has prospered through its citizens' efforts, which has an economy built through its citizens' efforts and which has confronted the Zionist challenge through a cultural and civilizational renaissance—can be an agent of the United States or can serve the U.S. policies? Moreover, no Arab country has offered any Arab cause more than Jordan has offered, despite Jordan's small resources and frailness. From 1950 and to this moment, Jordan has been building a modern state. In its political positions, including its position on the Shultz initiative, Jordan has not given up one iota insofar as the Palestinian people's rights are concerned. At the outset, the U.S. plan called for the countries involved in the conflict to meet. But King Husayn insisted that the parties involved in the conflict, including the PLO, meet. We are aware of the source of this accusation [of Americanization]. Its source is the state of aimlessness from which the Arab cause suffers. I do not wish to name certain regimes or certain movements. But isn't it most unjust to say what is said about a country like Jordan, with its small size and resources, with the

accomplishment it has made and with this army that it is building? Generally, we are content with the testimony of our Iraqi brothers and our brothers in Syria who laud Jordan. We are content with the testimony of the Egyptians. The testimony Jamal 'Abd-al-Nasir gave King Husayn and Jordan in his 1967 letter of resignation is enough for us.

08494

LEBANON

Editorial Describes U.S. Campaign Against Islam
44040231b Beirut AL-'AHD in Arabic 21 Apr 88 pp 1,14

[Editorial: "America's Attack On Islam Has Many Chapters and Covers; a Warlike, Resolute Stand is Needed In Order To Thwart the Plot"]

[Text] 18 April 1988: the picture has become completely clear, and the chapters are coming one after another.

The last chapter was written in the Gulf, where America moved without its cover, perhaps because covers are powerless or worthless by themselves.

The American Navy attacked Iranian oil wells and ships, and American patrol boats fired on Iranian artillery positions on Faw. This was from the fourth side, the sea; from the land on the other three sides, the front men—Saddam's army—moved in from their facing positions and from Bubiyan, which belongs to Kuwait's Sabah family, which has gone beyond providing financial, political and security support to play an operational role in the field.

Let us try to read matters carefully, so that the picture does not lose its clarity in a sea of petty details.

The Islamic revolution in Iran has always posed a real threat to American interests in the region, from the time it was launched, achieved victory, and survived.

The revolution's victory kindled Islamic revolutions throughout the Islamic world. A short while later, the Islamic revolution in Lebanon broke out. Its martyrs expelled the Marines and their European allies, routed the Israeli invasion, and inflicted a consuming wound on the northern flanks of the germ-ridden Zionist entity.

In Tunisia, Morocco, Egypt, Indonesia and elsewhere, the harbingers of revolution came one after another.

Then, just a short year later, the biggest volcano erupted. The Islamic uprising in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank broke out and blazed forth in a river of blood.

Because of this, America (whose president has boasted that his offensive posture has weakened Soviet influence) will be faced with the following problems.

1. America will find it difficult or impossible to maintain a direct presence, because the growing hatred on the part of the people of the Islamic world will make American military bases unwelcome and subject to attacks from would-be-martyrs.

2. There is the danger that the agent regimes might collapse. Since America has been managing the affairs of the region's countries by means of regimes totally loyal to it, the outbreak of Islamic revolutions and their successful elimination of these regimes will cause the region to slip out of the American grip.

3. What is even more dangerous is that Israel, the primary, chief base for American influence in the Islamic world, has become exposed to foreseeable and unforeseeable dangers.

The foreseeable danger obviously lies in the ongoing Islamic resistance in South Lebanon—in its struggle against the enemy and its agents and its refusal to submit to imaginary borders, which do not exist whenever Israel wants to advance and which are called into being whenever the resistance advances.

The most serious danger clearly lies in the ongoing popular uprising in the heart of the entity, threatening its stability, draining its energy, and taking up its resources.

The unforeseeable danger lies in the fact that the popular struggle with Israel, now taking place in two geographic areas, will not always be restricted to those areas.

The people of the region are one people, Islamic in feelings and reactions. Artificial regional boundaries cannot carve up this single Islamic body in which, if one member complains, all the other members call out to him vigilantly and protectively.

Therefore, the people will not hesitate long in responding to the appeal, and when they do, "Israel" will for the first time be faced with a real war with the people of the Islamic world. And this time, all that might be needed for victory is "for every individual to throw a bucket of water on Israel so it will drown."

Therefore, since the picture as the Americans see it is so completely black, why does the American administration remain in our region?

There is nothing new or strange in saying that America, Israel and the agent regimes awakened long ago to the dangerous ramifications of the Islamic revolution in the Islamic world, and have decided that they must all stand shoulder to shoulder in launching a comprehensive attack on the Islamic revolution wherever it is taking place.

The attack has two basic objectives: to wipe out the Islamic revolutions spreading throughout the Islamic world, primarily those in countries bordering "Israel,"

and to contain Iran's Islamic revolution within its narrow geographic boundaries. For the time being, America and its allies must remain content with containment, because right now, or for the near future, they cannot wipe out the revolution.

And so the comprehensive American attack began.

The agent regimes in Egypt, Tunisia, Morocco and elsewhere arrested Islamists and threw them in prison or executed them.

There was a bloodless coup in Tunisia, in which the weak were swept away and replaced by those strong enough to strike a blow to the Islamists.

While these rounds were somewhat easy, they were more difficult and complicated in Lebanon, Palestine and Iran.

In Palestine, the Americans gave Israel the green light to put down the uprising with whatever brutality it thought necessary, and ordered the television cameramen, who were offending the American viewer with scenes of violence (!), to desist from their activities.

Inside Israel, thousands were arrested, houses were demolished, pregnant women miscarried, children were suffocated, "activists," preachers and imams at mosques, and demonstration leaders were expelled, and so forth.

Outside Israel, Mossad, which cooperates with the CIA and its sister agencies, was given a free hand to amputate the overseas limbs of the uprising. Muhammad Bahis, Marwan Kayyali, and Muhammad Sultan were assassinated in Cyprus, and Abu-Jihad was assassinated in Tunisia.

In Lebanon, the Marines are powerless to intervene, TZAHAL [Israeli Defense Forces] is not doing anything, and Mossad and the CIA are working too slowly.

Therefore, the mission, or the plan, is being run by an agent regime. The plot is still small, but it is ambitious, has a good cover, and can attack, destroy, "liquidate," arrest, expel raid, and harass.

The final chapter, Iran, must be attacked so as to weaken the situation, arouse fear, and destroy morale.

Faw was chosen to fall. It was a strong, advance factor in Iran's defense, so it was brought down!

Saddam's army, which had been incapable of defending its territory, suddenly attacked, and "by chance" the American navy deployed its marines, ships and carriers to attack from the sea!

Therefore, the outlines of the attack are clear, from Palestine and Lebanon to Iran. It is a concerted American attack having many covers.

However, who is to say that this is the end of the world? The Islamic uprising gained its strength from its people, and its people are still standing firm and seeking martyrdom. The Islamic resistance is strong because of its fighters, who still know their beloved land. The Islamic revolution was and still is strong because of its struggling people.

Victory is not man's doing, but comes from God, and the devoted shall attain it.

8559

Committee Collects Contributions for Palestinian Uprising

44040231a Beirut AL-SAFIR in Arabic 25 Apr 88 p 1

[Excerpts] "You are not alone, and you in the West Bank, the Gaza Strip, and the rest of occupied Palestine will never be alone."

On Land Day, in a move which transcended the misfortunes and schisms imposed on the Lebanese and the Arabs, a group of citizens met under the slogan "you are not alone," in the name of the land and for its sake, in order to reach out to Palestine and confirm that all segments of Lebanese society stand united in support of Palestine.

During this meeting, they agreed to establish "the Lebanese Committee To Support the Uprising Of the Palestinian People In Their Own Land," a committee open to anyone who wants to contribute and work towards this goal. The committee has the sponsorship and blessings of an elite group of national leaders, including Former President Sulayman Franjiyah, Former Prime Minister Salim al-Huss, 'Adil 'Usayran, Former Prime Minister Taqi-al-Din al-Sulh, Shaykh Muhammad Mahdi Shams-al-Din, and Former Ministers Nasri al-Ma'luf, Dr Sa'id Hammadah, and Dr Najib Abu-Haydar.

In order to facilitate matters for those heeding the call of duty, a special account, number 85186, has been opened at the Beirut office and branches of the Banque Beyrouth Pour le Commerce.

8559

Amal Official Explains Clash With Hizballah in South

44000092 Beirut MONDAY MORNING in English
18-24 Apr 88 pp 10-13

[Article by Amal Fadlallah: "A. Haydar: Security in the South an Amal Movement Responsibility"]

[Excerpts] The Amal Movement is the decision-maker in South Lebanon, and it is entrusted with security in the South, according to 'Akif Haydar. If this Movement fails to maintain security there, it will be under the control of 'Arafat for a while, following which it will be part of the Israeli "security zone".

Haydar, the vice president of the Amal Movement, told this magazine that the American administration would not render any service to Lebanon if it were not for its own interest, noting that if it was sincerely concerned for Lebanon, it would not have used its veto against UN resolutions condemning Israel.

In case of a sudden Israeli withdrawal from Jazzin, Haydar underlined the need for entrusting the Lebanese Army First Brigade with security there and in the South, because this Army is acceptable by all sides. He also stressed the importance of opening all roads between this area and al-Biq'a.

Here is the translation of the interview, which was conducted in Arabic:

[Question] Who is responsible for the battles between the Amal Movement and Hizballah? What are their background? Can they be radically tackled? In case they resume do you think these battles will spread to Beirut?

[Answer] This topic should not be tackled militarily. What happened in the South was the outcome of ongoing violations against the security of the Amal Movement in the South. This Movement is the decision maker in South Lebanon, as a result of the accomplished fact, although an agreement was reached in Teheran to entrust the Amal Movement with security in the South. This agreement was concluded in writing, between the Movement, Hizballah and Iranian officials in Iran. This Movement has an Islamic context, as has Hizballah, but we thought that Hizballah had a similar method of thinking concerning means of liberating the South and in the methods of confronting the Israeli enemy. It seems that the agreement reached in Teheran was not respected in the South, a proof of which were the consecutive incidents. There should be security to guarantee the security of the Southerners and the moves of the resistance fighters. Thus security for the Amal Movement is adherent to the issue of liberation. The accomplished fact in the South is based on the following items:

—Helping the UN forces in their mission and protecting them, because they are the witnesses of what is happening in the South.

—The Amal Movement supports the UN resolutions which call for the unconditional withdrawal of the enemy from the South and the application of Resolution 425.

—The Movement is concerned with maintaining security there. This implies avoiding any violations in this direction through kidnapping of innocent Lebanese or foreigners.

—It is also concerned with the armed action in the South, which is prohibited except when they are aimed at confronting and resisting Israel.

All these matters were respected. At the beginning, certain Iranian sides insisted on not recognizing Resolution 425, but the South declared its stand in this respect. However, armed aggressions were made against the UN forces. On the political level, this contradicted the Movement's position, especially Resolution 425, which rejection was supported by certain Iranian officials. Hizballah, on his part, confirmed his rejection practically on the ground.

In reference to the lack of respect of the international forces in South Lebanon, there were many attacks made against these forces, and the Movement was forced to protect the former without directly clashing with the brothers in Hizballah.

The kidnapping of people in Lebanon by terrorists has nothing to do with Islamic interest. Such terrorist acts made all the Lebanese, especially the Shi'ites, as terrorist in the view of the international public opinion.

The moves in South Lebanon were rather military in nature with intensive weapons which should have been directed against Israel. The kidnapping of U.S. Colonel William Higgins took an important dimension and was misinterpreted, in the sense that it implied that the Movement was not interested in the issue of the American officer. This officer was serving with the Truce Supervision Committee, and his kidnapping shook the credibility of the Movement in relation to the security in the South, and consequently affected the security there and course of the resistance, because these two items are interlinked.

We are trying to control the movement of guns in the South, following the continued aggressions against the Southerners, including professors and of school principals. Such practices were aimed at disintegrating the South. If we lose security in the South, another security force would replace the Movement there.

When chaos dominated West Beirut, the Syrian troops moved in to restore the security situation. If the Movement fails to control security in the South, I believe that the security will not be in the hands of Hizballah, but under the control of 'Arafat for a short period, following which it will become, part of the Israeli "security zone" in South Lebanon. The inspection of cars used to take place very courteously, but certain people refused to be inspected for personal reasons. Others objected that those wearing a turban should not be inspected or questioned at all. Recently an Iranian car was passing, but refused to be inspected. Elements of Hizballah were summoned at night to attack the Movement checkpoint, and opened fire on the guards, wounding two of them and stealing their arms. Before we started any move, they tried to dominate Nabatiyah, and suddenly occupied the Movement's office, then moved to control Ghaziyah along the coastal road. Later on, Amal launched its military battle to recover its positions and to put an end to these violations.

[Question] Husayn Masawi leader of the Islamic Amal Movement said that what happened in the South was caused by a real conflict between two commitments: the commitment to the rule of the faqih (the Shi'ite cleric who is entrusted with political authority until the coming of the Mahdi), and an international commitment, and that Hizballah committed to the method for Imam Khomeini's rule, while the Amal Movement does not object to participate in negotiations and settlements. What is your response?

[Answer] I prefer not to answer this question, because Musawi does not have a political base. He was a member of the Amal Movement, then left it and now he follows Hizballah. However, it should be clear that the question of rule by the faqih is a very complex issue. The senior Ulemas in the Shi'ite community do not support the view that a faqih should exercise power. They support the concept of the Marja'iyah (adherence to the teaching on an eminent Shi'ite cleric who however exercises a religions rather than a political jurisdiction). In fact, the recent battle was a battle of security, and the Movement has guidelines different from those of other Islamic movements. The Amal Movement is a Lebanese, Arab, nationalist, humanitarian and a faithful Islamic Movement. There is no direct relation between the faqih rule, and the enmity for the United States, the commitment to the Marja'iyah and any other political trend. As far as I know, the senior Ulemas like Sayyid Mohammad Husayn Fadlallah, Sheikh Mohammad Mahdi Shams al-Din and Sheikh Qabalan, do not support the rule of faqih.

[Question] Certain foreign news agencies reported that the incidents in South Lebanon were rather a confrontation between the Syrian trend and the Iranian trend in Lebanon. What is your response? And does this analysis hold true?

[Answer] People in Lebanon, after this lengthy war, interpret whatever takes place here as the result of an outside intervention, to an extent that any matter, even of a small importance is said to take place under the instructions of Syria or Iran. In fact, there is a Lebanese will in various scopes, which is not affected by regional or international events. What happened in the South was not planned. We did not discuss the security of the South for the interest of Syria, but for the interest of the National Resistance. If Syria benefits from this situation, let it benefit, and if Iran benefits, let it benefit, but this is not a matter imposed on the Amal Movement, which has friends and alliances, and is a free Movement.

/9274

LIBYA

Recent Changes in Internal Situation Discussed
45040145 London AL-MAJALLAH in Arabic
25 May 88 pp 22-27

[Article by Talhah Jibril]

[Text] Tripoli—The Green Square is in the center of Tripoli, Libya's capital. A military parade is staged in

this square on the first day of every September—or al-Fatih month, according to the foreign names used by Libya. No sure figure can be given for the sums of money Libya has spent on the acquisition of weapons since 1969. But it is certain that they amount to billions of dollars. A large part of the oil revenues have been spent for armament and military training purposes. There is no doubt that the expenditure of these sums on weapons has reflected negatively on the plans to expand the service and recreation facilities.

Tripoli's main commercial streets branch from the Green Square. Alleys and lanes also meander from this square in the direction of the old city, which continued for decades to be the ideal site for conventional commerce—a site swarming with craftsmen and their shops. In this regard, Tripoli is no different from the ancient cities of the Arab Maghreb. But it is said that the Libyan capital is witnessing the beginning of the correction led by Chairman Mu'ammar al-Qadhafi against the revolutionary committees and their resolutions. After declaration of the Jamahiriya in 1977, when Libya came to be known officially as the Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya—to which the word "Greater" was added in the wake of the U.S. raid—Colonel al-Qadhafi came up with the interesting idea of eliminating the middleman (meaning the merchant) between the producer and the consumer.

Failure To Eliminate Middleman

The gist of this idea is that the middleman is not entitled to accumulate a fortune from work based fundamentally on distributing industrial and agricultural goods and commodities. The idea, it seems, sought to bring down prices or to curtail their rise. But its application led to negative results which have had their impact on the economic and commercial prosperity.

The merchant was replaced by state-controlled establishments called the trade establishments. The gist of this idea is that the government can perform the merchant's tasks by collecting goods and foodstuffs from factories and farms and distributing them to the public at cost price. This is not a totally new idea. It had been previously applied in Egypt in the form of the so-called consumer cooperatives, but failed because the Egyptian bureaucracy put its stranglehold on the cooperatives and turned them into ideal establishments for encouraging the circulation of goods in the black market.

In Egypt, the consumer cooperatives performed their role side-by-side with the private sector. In Libya, the private sector was finally forced to depart from the market.

Years after elimination of the merchant's role in Libya, the situation has become extremely thorny. In the commercial streets branching from the Green Square, all the businesses have been closed. No visitor to Libya would realize that he was touring a commercial street if it

weren't for the half-fallen signs indicating that these places were commercial businesses at one time. In one of the main commercial streets, only Libyan banks and the offices of some Arab airlines exist.

This is why it is difficult for one to understand such a problem in a city like Tripoli, which is a commercial port to start with.

Revival of the Private Sector

Within the framework of the new trends in Libya, Colonel al-Qadhafi initiated the effort to restore a limited role to the private sector in the area of trade. As soon as the Libyans got the message, preparations were made to open the businesses, and people started painting the fronts of their shops that had been closed for more than 10 years. Al-Qadhafi has sought to couple this internal relaxation with the release of detainees, with codification of the arrest procedures, and with permitting the return of the opponents and the exiled to accompany the timid return of the private sector.

In a television symposium, al-Qadhafi announced that small merchants could resume their activity. In this symposium, he even talked about Adam Smith's theory which constitutes a mainstay of the western capitalist society—a theory which says: "laissez-faire." He expressed his displeasure with the phenomenon of columns of people lining up in front of the trade establishments because of the scarcity of goods and the supply crisis. The fact is that since the elimination of the merchant's role, the Libyan markets have experienced a noticeable recession. During a visit to Libya and a tour of one of the trade establishments, it was noticed that the goods displayed were incompatible with a country which is supposed to have strongly enjoyed the fruits of the oil boom. The goods were of a low quality and the manner of display was very poor. Moreover, some essentials were non-existent. On a very hot day, a long line of people were waiting in front of the establishment for the arrival of the dairy van.

Despite the emphasis put on the right of any Libyan to enjoy the wealth he makes with his own sweat, there is a disparity of income. Because of the blockade imposed on Libya by the outside world, especially by the western countries, the prices of some commodities are very high when compared with the prices in other similar countries. The price of a kilogram of lamb meat is seven Libyan dinars or the equivalent of \$21. On the other hand, vegetable prices are low when compared with the income level. The price of a kilogram of tomatoes, for example, is one dinar (\$3) and that of a kilogram of potatoes is .5 dinars.

The Disappearance of People's Committees

Upon my arrival in Tripoli, the Libyan television was showing Durayd Lahham's Wadi al-Misk ["Musk Valley"] series which deals with corruption, graft, favoritism, and election farces. Aside from this series, the

television programs were confined to guided political topics presented in an uncomfortable manner and newscasts which can be employed against the American and French policies. Generally, Libyan television does not encourage viewing. It has been said that most of Tripoli's residents turn their television antennae toward Italy to pick up Italian television programs. Libyan television presents daily sessions of the people's congresses which have been summoned to discuss the "human rights charter" that has been proposed by al-Qadhdhafi and that seeks to codify the latest measures.

The session of one of these people's congresses was held in Qashlun, a residential quarter in Tripoli. In accordance with the law in force, a people's congress consists of all the residents of a quarter or of a district who are aged 18 or older. The conferees met in a hall, sitting on mats spread on the floor. Meanwhile, the people's committee emanating from the congress sat at a table facing the conferees to manage the congress.

Attack on the Revolutionary Committees

The conferees discussed the abovementioned charter, and all the debates concerned supporting the latest procedures and adding further details to them. What drew attention is that some conferees put strong emphasis on the issue of freedom of the press.

Some of the participants were content to explain the charter in their discussions. One participant proposed that the charter include a provision stipulating that the state may not intervene in the domestic affairs of other countries. He also proposed that personal weapons carried by some people, who he did not name, be withdrawn. One can conclude that he meant members of the revolutionary committees which have been the most influential Libyan agencies since declaration of the Jamahiriyah. It is obvious that the new phase dictates that these committees' influence be curtailed. There are even those who talk about eliminating these committees and referring their members to the courts, charged with committing violations which have led to the detention of some citizens and even to the execution of others.

These committees were empowered to arrest whomever they wished to arrest, to confiscate money and property, and to put travel bans on whomever they wished. When al-Qadhdhafi tore up the lists of people banned from travel, those lists included one which contained the names of the people banned by the revolutionary committees from leaving Libya. The jurisdiction of these committees touched everything.

It is certain that the visitor to Libya will clearly notice that the latest steps have created a tangible climate of relaxation. There are no more offhanded arrests. Such arrests were made in the past without any controls and reached such an extent that al-Qadhdhafi himself noted that "there are wronged and innocent people arrested on mere suspicions." Moreover, Libyans can now travel

without obstacles. This perhaps explains why Tripoli Airport is constantly overcrowded. As a result of the abolition of the ban on travel abroad, the Libyans have demanded that the sum of money travelers are permitted to take with them be increased. Any Libyan wishing to go abroad is currently permitted a sum equalling \$1,000 once a year.

Al-Qadhdhafi has said openly that some Libyans resort to illegal channels to take money abroad. He said in this regard that some people concealed their dollars in toothpaste tubes or in their socks. He added that the people's congresses must decide what they deem fit in connection with increasing the sums permitted for tourism purposes. The ceiling set for the sums permitted to be transmitted abroad, and the fact that Arab contract workers were permitted to remit only 50 percent of their wages, perhaps encouraged the black market dollar transactions to flourish. The dollar price in this market has reached one dinar, whereas the dinar equals \$3 in banks.

Return of the Tunisians

Libya's fluctuating policy toward its Arab neighbors has had a noticeable impact on the Arab workers and technicians attracted by the Libyan labor market. From the end of 1969 until the mid-1970's, Egyptian labor was predominant. When Egyptian-Libyan relations deteriorated, Egyptian workers decreased in number and were replaced by Tunisian, Turkish, and Maltese workers. When Libya's relations with Tunisia deteriorated and its relations with Morocco and Sudan improved after Numayri was toppled, the Libyan establishments made contracts with large numbers of Moroccan and Sudanese workers. Today's visitor to Libya notices that most of the service establishments in particular are manned by Sudanese and Moroccans. But Tunisians have begun to come to Libya in large numbers in the wake of the decision to open the borders between the two countries.

Near a taxicab stop in old Tripoli, one sees large numbers of newly-arrived Tunisians wrapped in their cloaks preparing to spend the night on the sidewalks. When morning arrives, they begin to look for work or to sell the simple goods they brought with them from Tunisia (chocolate, spices, and dates). But it seems they make decent profits from selling these goods.

Border crossing by Tunisians is no longer obstructed by any barriers. It suffices to show one's identity card. Moreover, large numbers of Libyans, amounting to 30,000 persons daily, go to Tunisia. The Libyans expect this number to be doubled with the onset of the summer holidays.

Many issues have been stirring in Libya since the 3 March 1988 resolutions, and these issues merit attention and followup.

OMAN

Country Calls for Reduced Oil Production

44000100 Paris AL-MUSTAQBAL in Arabic
21 May 88 pp 9-10

[Text] Omani Oil Minister, Sa'id al-Shanfari, called for the acceptance of a proposal involving a 5 percent joint reduction in oil production by OPEC and non-OPEC oil exporting countries. The minister indicated that the oil market requires an outlet for a surplus which amounts to 700-800 thousand barrels of oil per day.

After his return from the last OPEC meeting in Vienna, the Omani oil minister said in a press release published in Muscat that OPEC countries can still study the suggestion before them, submitted by oil-producing non-OPEC nations. The proposal calls for a 5 percent joint reduction in output which will maintain the price of oil at around 18 dollars per barrel. Minister al-Shanfari indicated that the reduction will in no way mean a reduction in the petroleum revenues of any country. The reductions, in the words of the Omani minister, will stabilize prices at a reasonable level.

Minister al-Shanfari emphasized that "the Sultanate of Oma played an important role in maintaining the price of oil in recent times, through contacts with a number of non-OPEC, oil-exporting countries."

The Omani minister's statement in regard to his country's support for reducing oil production by 5% indicated that differences exist among GCC states on the subject of the suggested reduction. Saudi Arabia and Kuwait strongly opposed the suggestion. Saudi Arabia presented an alternative proposal which suggests that the surplus should be eliminated from the world oil market

by sharing the reduction equally between the member and non-member countries. The reduction therefore, would be on a barrel for barrel basis, rather than a percentage basis.

Observers believe that only Iran will profit from the reduction in oil production. Iran calls for a reduction in the oil production of OPEC and non-OPEC countries, in an attempt to raise the price of oil, thus enabling Tehran, which exports large quantities of oil because of the war, to offer large discounts in the price of her oil on the one hand, and on the other hand to cover the cost of shipping its oil from Kharj Island to Larak Island, which was subjected this week to intense Iraqi bombardment.

Government Advances Omanization in Banking Industry

Indigenous Labor Reaches 58 Percent

44000106 Paris AL-MUSTAQBAL in Arabic
28 May 88 pp 28-29

[Text] The Sultanate of Oman has been partially able to solve its indigenous labor problem in banking, contrary to the case in other Gulf countries. Official Omani statistics show that on average, the percentage of Omani workers in commercial banking, relative to total workers had reached 58 percent by the end of 1987. It is significant that the number of Omani workers employed in banking reached 2026 in 1987, whereas the number of foreign workers was 1463.

Official Omani Statistics

44000121 Muscat TIMES OF OMAN in English
28 Apr 88 p 22

[Text] The data below which have been compiled by the Banking Control Department of the CBO represent the percentage of Omani employees to the total number of staff in all banks. A directive issued by the Central Bank in March 1986 made it imperative for banks to progressively increase the number of Omani members of their staff to attain a level of at least 90 percent Omanization by the end of 1990.

Base Date	30 Jun 83	31 Dec 84	31 Dec 85	31 Dec 86	31 Dec 87
Omani	1097 (40 percent)	1342 (45 percent)	1619 (49 percent)	1857 (53 percent)	2026 (58 percent)
Non-Omani	1620	1623	1717	1648	1463
Total	2717	2695	3336	3505	3489

SUDAN

Bahr al-Ghazal Acting Governor Criticizes Security Conditions

45040125 Khartoum AL-USBU' in Arabic 18 Apr 88 p 5

[Interview with Henry Tong, acting governor of Bahr al-Ghazal, by Muhammad Hasan: "These Are the Reasons for the Famine and High Prices"; in Waw; date not given]

[Text] It is a city of death, hunger, and sickness. Once, it was the focus of the South's dreams and an important

commercial center. It has become virtually deserted because of deteriorating security conditions resulting from the current rebellion in the South and tribal disputes that have reached the point of fighting. It is the city of Waw, which has perished due to the selfishness of its sons. None of the governors and ministers who have been appointed have reached Waw; instead, they became merchants in the Arab market in Khartoum, Kusti, and Port Sudan. They were interested in getting rich quickly by selling the region's crops of sugar, flour, and food oil, or petroleum. They even sold the principal food of the citizens, sorghum, thus causing a crushing famine in Waw.

As we say this, a kilah of sorghum sells for 120 Sudanese pounds in Waw, with the rainy season approaching. If food does not reach Waw by the end of this April, goodbye to the inhabitants of Waw.

We conducted this interview with Mr Henry Tong, the minister of administration and acting governor of the region. People call him, "the minister of the ministries," referring to the fact that he is the only minister who has been present in Waw since this government was appointed. The others are "Khartoum ministers." He spoke about all the conditions prevailing in the region and the reasons for the failure. Now to the transcript of the interview:

Security Conditions in the Region

[Question] We would like to begin this interview by discussing security conditions in the region.

[Answer] There is a war going on between the Sudanese government and the rebellion movement. Many things have resulted from the war. Those who do not agree with the movement in its strategy and fear that the movement will force them to support it are using all means to defend themselves. One of the war's effects has been the hardship citizens are experiencing. Some people, exploiting the situation, have formed gangs to plunder and loot, compounding the suffering of the citizens, and leading to security disturbances in the region.

However, everyone here agrees that this war is destructive and that one must work as quickly as possible to stop it.

Police in Waw

[Question] Why are such large numbers of police being drafted, despite the fact that their activity is currently restricted to within Waw?

[Answer] Since 1983, we have lost approximately one-half of the police force. The presently existing force cannot cover the duties assigned to it—for example, night patrols, investigation, and searches. To date, we have drafted one-fourth the number we need in order for us to be able to close the current police deficit.

Full Confidence in the Police

[Question] The police are accused of cooperating with the rebels. They are also accused of breaking open stores and stealing from them during their night patrols.

[Answer] The [first] accusation is untrue, as proved by the fact that the police have lost many lives in fighting the rebels in Rumbek, Uwayl, Tonj, and Gogrial. The numbers that have reached Waw have embarked upon carrying out their duties along with the other forces present. Large numbers of the police have been injured or wounded.

The charge that they break open and steal from stores is groundless. The police forces patrol jointly with the other regular forces in accordance with a decree we have set forth through the Committee on Security in the Region. The decree specifies that patrols be formed from the police and the people's armed forces. In any case, we have apprehended the offenders, and they are now in prison.

Game Wardens and Rebels

[Question] Despite the fact that large numbers of game wardens have joined the rebel movement, more are being drafted. How are you insuring that they will not join the rebel movement again?

[Answer] While it is true that large numbers of game wardens joined the rebellion, this can in no way be a reason for not drafting other forces. We have to make up the deficiency in these forces so that they can carry out their missions. While it is true that their activity is now restricted to Waw, after the end of this war they will return to their jobs throughout the region. We therefore have to prepare for that stage right now.

Militias in Waw

[Question] Are the militias in Waw carrying out the role prescribed for them? Do you have supervisory authority over them?

[Answer] The militias we found upon our arrival in Waw did not perform the function we expected of them. This was because they were formed on a tribal basis—specifically, from the Fertit tribe. All they were doing was plundering, looting, and killing women and children.

Our view was that the militias were a defense movement and that each group should organize itself in its own localities for their defense. We issued a regional order to the effect that the militias should return to their localities and leave the city of Waw, because maintaining security in the city was the special domain of the people's armed forces and the other regular forces.

Recently, however, the Fertit militias have been converted into peace forces which include all the other tribes and are under the direct supervision of the armed forces. They will support this approach, because we in the government work with any group that calls for peace, and we are working to achieve peace.

In fact, the role of the people's armed forces has been outstanding. If it were not for their presence, we would not be enjoying this security and stability in all cities and districts of the region, especially in the city of Waw.

No Medicine in Waw

[Question] What are the reasons for the absence of medicine in the hospital of Waw?

[Answer] That is the result of security conditions and the difficulty of transportation. We have therefore been unable to bring in medicine for a long time. However, there are medicines on their way to the region which will arrive during the coming month.

School Closures

[Question] Despite the stability of security in the city of Waw, the schools are closed. Why?

[Answer] The reasons involve tribal conflicts. Many lives have been lost in the course of them, and this has led to a lack of trust between the two sides in the struggle. Add to this the fact that most of the students have migrated to Khartoum and other Sudanese cities. We have tried to contain the situation. We have been successful to a great extent, and this has enabled us to continue studies in the final preparatory, intermediate, and preparatory grades (those subject to tests). We will work to open all the schools shortly. The schools of Raga have not been affected by this situation due to their distance from the scene of these events.

We closed the schools of Uwayl a year ago because of the famine that has swept over the town.

Teacher Problems

[Question] Teachers complain that their salaries have not been paid for several months, that there is a lack of interest in training, and that schools have not been maintained for many years.

[Answer] It is true that some teachers have not been paid their salaries for a number of months due to circumstances beyond our control. As regards training, a large number of teachers in all the specializations have been posted for training; however, transportation conditions sometimes prevent teachers from reaching Khartoum and enrolling in the training institutes.

As for maintenance of the schools, new conditions have emerged. When security conditions became tense during the tribal fighting in Waw, saboteurs found the opportunity to break into public buildings, including schools. They stripped the zinc from roofs, broke windows, and looted chairs. It was part of the sabotage carried on by the militias, as I mentioned earlier. However, we are now working to repair what can be repaired.

Timber Business

[Question] A serious phenomenon is the cutting of timber without the knowledge of the Department of Forests. The wood is dispatched outside Waw for sale. What is your position on this phenomenon?

[Answer] We are now investigating the matter, because the Department of Forests has granted no permit for this. All these problems go back to the fluctuating

security situation. Some people have taken advantage of it and given themselves the right to cut, load, and sell wood without the knowledge of the relevant authorities. With the help of the people's armed forces, we shall stop this cutting, because the wood lies outside the city and can be cut only after strict protection.

Severe Price Rise

[Question] What lies behind the severe rise in food prices? Why has the regional government failed to provide food?

[Answer] Short supply and high demand are among the principal reasons. Furthermore, food supplies reach Waw by land and at great risk to the owners, which is another reason for the high price. As a government, we can requisition all the goods in the stores and sell them at reasonable prices. But will this procedure guarantee us that goods arrive again? Therefore, we periodically contact our brothers in the Chamber of Commerce and urge them not to charge excessively high prices.

Relief Supplies

[Question] Where do the relief materials received in Khartoum by the regional government go?

[Answer] First of all, since the arrival of this government in Waw, no relief supplies have reached us from the Relief Commission in Khartoum. They may have given relief to southern citizens who have migrated to Khartoum and some other cities. Here in Waw, we have only a relief coordination committee, whose job is to record areas affected by famine, prepare lists of their names, and deliver them to relief organizations that distribute to people directly and without intermediary.

Relief Organizations in the Region

[Question] People charge that the relief organizations working in Waw offer their services only after a recommendation from church agencies.

[Answer] The charge is not true. The subject of Christianity and Islam and the antagonism between them does not come up in Waw. Even in the government, some of us are Muslims and some of us are Christians.

(Editor: It should be mentioned that the representative of "Sudan Aid" in Waw is the bishop of Waw, Joseph Nikidi. The fratello [brother] who will be acting on his behalf is of Indian nationality [Qudyu], and lives in the building of the priests' school in the Nazareth Quarter.)

Government Role in Relief

[Question] People charge that the relief materials obtained by the regional government are distributed to senior government employees and do not go to the people who need them.

[Answer] As I mentioned previously, our role is limited to preparing lists through the coordinating committee. Distribution falls within the province of the relief organizations. They, of course, have their own systems and regulations about distribution. In regard to some workers with limited income in the region, we have recommended that they be given relief, since their salaries do not cover the high cost of living. Thus, the charge that relief materials go to senior government employees is untrue.

(Editor: One observes in Waw that senior government employees have what amounts to fixed shares of relief material distributed to them every month—sorghum, flour, oil, sugar, and rice. Their stores attest to this.)

Charges Concerning the Regional Governor

[Question] People in the street charge that the governor took 2 million Sudanese pounds when he left for Khartoum, leading to a shortage of funds in the regional government. Is this true?

[Answer] I cannot prove it. However, when the governor left for Khartoum, he took all the money in the region's bank account. He left no money in the account.

[Question] People also charge that while the governor was in Waw, he showed no interest in the welfare of the region, but spent most of his time at home with his close associates.

[No answer given]

Armed Forces Role Appreciated

[Question] Why haven't you tried to bring the train as far as Waw?

[Answer] Security circumstances are the primary reason. In fact, the armed forces played a notable part in bringing the train as far as Uwayl by guarding the railway workers as they performed their duties. The people's forces are ready to perform this role at any time they are asked; however, the brothers in the railroad have no desire to work. We will therefore contact the prime minister to move this matter. We in the regional government are ready to provide the work force if he asks us.

Tonj Project

[Question] Who is responsible for neglecting the Tonj kenaf project equipment that can be found in the Waw railroad yard?

[Answer] Instability and the deteriorating security situation have led to the neglect. These circumstances facilitated the theft of water pumps and electrical generators from the project site, creating heavy losses for the project. In addition, project officials in Khartoum did

not sent an employee to Waw to follow up the work, despite the fact that they knew that the employees who were here had joined the rebellion movement.

Regional Prisons

[Question] Deaths within the prisons are increasing because food is not available to inmates. What is the solution to this problem?

[Answer] First of all, the regional government has no revenues; even salaries come from Khartoum. In the regional government budget we found sums for government units, including the prisons. Unfortunately, the central government has refused to pay any money under the category of services. We therefore can do nothing about the matter.

[Question] Are you satisfied with the current situation in the region?

[Answer] I am not satisfied with the situation in the entire Sudan. The problem we are experiencing here results from the war now going on. We must therefore work to solve this problem, so as to arrive at the peace that is sought, because this war has created other groups fighting each other as well as among themselves.

We ask God to inspire us with the right ideas to solve this problem.

12937

SYRIA

Writer Evaluates Relations With USSR, Role in Mideast

44040236a London AL-NASHRAH
AL-ISTIRATIJIYAH 12 Apr 88 pp 2-5

[Article: "Some Features of the Current Syrian Situation"]

[Excerpts] Following the recent Syrian-Palestinian meeting and the other developments that have followed one another in the region, one can view some features of the current Syrian situation as follows (see also AL-NASHRAH AL-ISTIRATIJIYAH, Vol 9, No 7 on Syrian-Palestinian relations):

Some Features of the Syrian Situation

Syrian-American relations: American-Syrian relations constitute one of the most important elements of the current situation in the region and a vital testing ground for developing the Arab-Israeli peace process in the context of the latest American initiative. American sources hold to the theory that there is an increasing conviction on the part of the secretary of state, George Shultz, that it is necessary to observe "the Syrian factor" as much as possible, while the former administration's

approach had been inclined to ignore this factor, or attempt to bypass it. However, the practical, direct results arising from the contacts between the two parties in the recent period are still, it appears, far from the acceptable minimum from the Syrian viewpoint at a time when Syria is continuing to look most warily at American political-diplomatic movements in the region and the objectives sought from them. The fact is that American-Syrian contacts are reflected on the Syrian situation on two main fronts that are different but interlinked:

The peace process and the international conference: In spite of the American awareness of the importance of the Syrian role in the framework of the peace process and the proposed international conference, it appears that the major American goal at the present time is aimed at guaranteeing Syrian participation in any coming talks, although within narrow limited contexts. Thus it is to be deduced from various Arab sources that America is seeking to restrict the Syrian role to treatment of the future of occupied Golan in one of the bilateral committees derived from the conference, while it will not have a role in dealing with the future of the bank and the strip or the broader Palestinian issue. It appears that the United States informed Syria of this position officially during one of the meetings which took place between Shultz and President al-Asad, and the Syrian party confirmed the truth of this American position during the latest Palestinian-Syrian talks in Damascus.

It is clear that this premise totally contradicts the Syrian notion of the national dimensions of the conflict and that it involves an attempt to break the negotiations up and make the Syrian role a marginal one. This contradicts the visible Syrian political interests and, to the Syrians, raises the specter of a new "Camp David." Some sources have stated that the United States has gone so far as to propose the return of Golan to Syria in a demilitarized form similar to the security system applied in Sinai. However, Syria has rejected this proposal, on grounds that it will detract from the right of sovereignty on Syrian national territory. In spite of the difficulty of investigating the veracity of this news item specifically, it is not to be ruled out that the United States is trying to offer enticements of this sort (even in the absence of Israeli consensus on such proposals), in the desire to gain acceptance for the format of bilateral negotiations with generally limited powers and isolate Syria from the ability to exert an influence on the course of the central talks on the Palestine issue specifically.

Within the same context, the American party, it appears, has striven to get Syria's agreement to the concept of a joint Palestinian-Jordanian delegation (provided that the Palestinian personnel be acceptable in Israeli terms) and to win it over in some way to the "Jordanian option" which is still the basis of the American-Israeli approaches as far as resolution of the conditions of the bank and the strip is concerned. However, the Syrian

position, conversely, has stressed the need for the presence of the PLO at all talks and the need for the establishment of a united Arab delegation composed essentially of Syria, Jordan and the PLO. The emphasis on a united Arab delegation has emerged as an instrument for guaranteeing Syrian participation in talks which will address the Palestinian problem in its various dimensions. Syria also considers that it would be preferable for it to be the "weightier" Arab party within the Syrian-Jordanian-Palestinian trinity, which will consequently have a distinctive voice in determining the course and results of the talks. In another context, there is an important difference between the Syrian conception of the powers of the international conference and the ability of the other participating parties (aside from the local ones) to play an active, effective role in the negotiations, and the American conception, which is still far from acceptance of such a format.

In brief, there are no clear early signs of an American-Syrian agreement on the coming phase of the diplomatic process and its requirements. In general, one can expect more American-Syrian contacts and consultations during the stage that is coming soon and after Shultz's future rounds in the region, without there of necessity being major progress in the area of narrowing the gap between the two parties in the foreseeable future.

Lebanese conditions: It is difficult to separate the relative American openness on the Syrian role in Lebanon from a general American concern to satisfy Syria and moderate its position on the diplomatic process which the United States is overseeing in the framework of the Arab-Israeli struggle. However, there is a complex of American and Syrian interests and considerations in Lebanon which might constitute a future incentive for their moves on this stage. The issue of the American and Western hostages still is a vital, sensitive one and it might have special significance for the American administration in the presidential election year. Conversely, Syria has a direct interest in contributing to the release of the hostages, in the desire to support its position on the domestic Lebanese stage and disprove allegations of its involvement in "international terrorism," which Syria considers defame it greatly in the international area. There also is Syrian and American wariness regarding the various conspicuous developments in Lebanese conditions, including the possibilities of a rise in fundamentalist Islamic currents, the expansion of the "Iranian tide" through them, and Lebanon's re-emergence as an arena of Israeli-Palestinian, or Israeli-Syrian, confrontation, as in the pre-1982 stage.

The issue of the Lebanese presidential elections which are coming soon constitutes a major element of pressure on Syrian and American efforts, in view of the serious constitutional crisis and added deterioration in the internal struggle that might arise from them. However, evidence indicates that a common view has not been arrived at between the two parties on the issue of the presidency and the necessary political reforms in the

Lebanese system connected to that. Some Arab sources state that the United States has not agreed to Syrian ideological positions on limiting the powers of the president and eliminating political factionalism. What makes the matter more complex is Syria's growing conviction in the difficulty of dealing with the Lebanese president, Amin al-Jumayyil, and its lack of confidence in his stands in general. The fact is that the recent period has witnessed an escalation in the war of words between the Lebanese president and Syria, and this will not help resolve the situation between the two parties or increase chances for agreement between them regarding the new president. Syria considers that the United States has not put pressure to a sufficient degree on President Jumayyil or on the various Maronite forces in general, in spite of the repeated rounds the American female emissary April Glassby has made between Damascus and Beirut.

For their part, Syrian assessments hold that the Lebanese Forces have resumed their relations and previous coordination with Israel, although the magnitude of this coordination is not yet totally clear. This comes at a time when Israel has recommended itself as a party to any Lebanese resolution (as the United States informed Syria), following the emergence of evidence of the removal of direct "active" Israeli military action in this context. These developments will not have the effect of encouraging Syria to further confidence in the American position, especially since the United States is still seeking, it seems, to get the Syrian forces out of Lebanon (this has been confirmed by the American position in the Security Council, which calls for the withdrawal of "all foreign forces" from Lebanese territory following the recent Israeli attack on the south).

However, the fact is that the Syrian position in Lebanon is not firm enough to impose unilateral Syrian solutions, in spite of lengthy Syrian experience with the Lebanese crisis and its various elements. On the one hand, the rifts and differences within Shi'ite ranks are proceeding to constitute a source of embarrassment and pressure on Syria, and on the other hand there are ongoing Syrian difficulties in dealing with the independent ideologies of some key local allies such as the Druzes. At the same time, there is no real harmony of interests and goals among Syria's supposed allies in this arena. Indeed, the contradictions among them remain subject from time to time to outbursts (between the Sunnis and the Shi'ites, the Druze and the Shi'ites, and so forth), and in addition to all this the Palestinian element in Lebanon remains vital and Syria is attempting to bring it over to its side within the domestic balance of power, although it is not clear if the Syrian-Palestinian positions in Lebanon will be oriented toward agreement even following new relations between the two parties. Perhaps the most important lesson of the war of the camps and the Syrian-Palestinian disputes surrounding them is that Syrian power to impose a specific course on the Palestinian party is not guaranteed in the best of conditions.

Thus, under such circumstances, the possibilities of Syrian-American agreement on Lebanon continue to be

fraught with many contingencies, contradictory problems and considerations of interests and developments outside the will of either of the two parties. This does not rule out the possibility of the continuation of the dialogue between them or even progress toward the treatment of some pending issues (the question of the hostages, for example). However, the scope of mutual understanding between them will most probably remain limited.

Syrian-Soviet relations: It appears that Syrian-Soviet relations have passed through a totally unstable phase in the recent period. Some Western sources stated previously that the Soviet Union rejected a Syrian demand to obtain extremely accurate long-range SS-23 ground-to-ground missiles failing clear flexibility in the Syrian position on a political resolution in the region.

However, the fact is that it is difficult to investigate such information and it is possible to interpret it differently, even if its veracity is confirmed. It is necessary to take it into consideration that there are ongoing Syrian demands regarding a broad spectrum of Soviet arms systems, and the Soviets' refusal to respond to some of these requests does not of necessity mean a shift in their policy stance vis-a-vis Syria. For example, the Soviets traditionally have reservations on supplying their local friends with developed offensive arms systems such as SS-23 missiles, and they have previously delivered to the Syrians significant quantities of SS-21 or SCUD-B rockets, sufficient to meet Syria's needs for deterrence in the Soviet view. In addition to that, the SS-23 missiles (with a range of 500 kilometers) have been eliminated from the Soviet arsenal by virtue of an agreement to remove the missiles from the European theater and it is likely that the Soviet Union has been hesitating to send them to third parties at a time like this specifically. To all that, it should be added that the Soviet party is still supplying Syria with advanced MiG-29 aircraft, new warships (the most recent of which were three modern submarines) and M-T missile systems of various types, which will make it difficult to accuse the Soviets of "stinginess" in this area, even if the rate of delivery of Syrian arms has slowed down for reasons which might be related to Syrian absorptive capacity as much as they can be ascribed to any other cause.

However, the presumed instability in relations between the two countries could be inspired by considerations other than weapons. According to the estimates of some Arab circles, the Syrian party has not shown growing enthusiasm for chances of a new detente between the United States and the Soviet Union and the precedent of the agreement between the two great powers on Afghanistan. The source of the lack of Syrian confidence in this area is the fear of the possibility of Soviet bargaining over the situation in the Middle East in exchange for the acquisition of preference or improved conditions with respect to other regional struggles or in the context of any strategic nuclear disarmament agreement between the two superpowers. In another context, it is possible to

predict that Syria might not be totally satisfied with the current Soviet orientation to improve relations with Israel (see the article in the section on Israeli issues in this issue of AL-NASHRAH AL-ISTIRATIJIYAH), especially in the absence of any indication of matching Israeli political-diplomatic concessions. Perhaps the frank Soviet talk on the need to restore diplomatic relations with Israel at the Gorbachev-al-Asad meeting in Moscow last year was not totally accepted from the Syrian point of view.

The Gulf war front: One can say that the recent developments in the Gulf war have not developed in favor of support for the Syrian position in general. Thus, the setbacks which afflicted Iran in Faw after the naval confrontation with the American forces have led to the strengthening of Iraq's position within the existing intra-Arab balance, and Iran's entry into direct escalating hostility with such key Gulf forces as Saudi Arabia and Kuwait has limited Syria's ability to appear as an Arab party able to control likely developments in the Arab-Iranian confrontation (refer in this regard as well to the evaluation of the Syrian role in the Gulf in AL-NASHRAH AL-ISTIRATIJIYAH, Vol 8, No 23). From this angle, the continuation of good Syrian-Iranian relations might amount to a source of embarrassment and pressure on Syria on the part of specific Arab parties, instead of a source of strength which could be converted to support for the Syrian position as a "good interlocutor" in the Gulf crisis.

In general, the limits of Syrian influence on Iranian decisionmaking have started to appear with increasing clarity, reducing the credibility of the Syrian statement that the maintenance of open lines with Iran will in effect contribute to a positive influence on the Iranian decisionmaking process; in exchange it is not clear that the Iranian party is now more prepared than before to give up any of its "cards" on behalf of the Syrian party, in particular as far as the status of the hostages in Lebanon is concerned. Some Arab assessments hold to the theory that Syria has been afflicted with disappointment on the constant Iranian orientation to exploit the issue of the hostages for direct purposes of Iranian interests, without attention to Syrian interests or concerns in this area.

The recent clashes between the AMAL movement and the Hizballah in southern Lebanon and the southern suburbs of Beirut constitute evidence of one of the most important focal points of tension in Syrian-Iranian relations and the ongoing competition between the two parties (if only by proxy) to extend their influence on the Lebanese stage. The results of the struggle going on concerning leadership of the Shiite faction in Lebanon will constitute a vital indication of the Iranian-Syrian balance of power not just in Lebanon but also in the general regional context.

However, mutual Syrian-Iranian interests still seem adequate to transcend the contradictions in their positions and interests so far. One aspect of these interests was

confirmed recently following the agreement to renewal of Iranian oil support for Syria, which is estimated at 20,000 barrels of free crude oil a day and an unspecified amount of "contract oil" at market price. It is worth mentioning that reliable Western sources state that Syria has not drawn its allotments of "contract oil" in the past 2 years as a result of a failure to amend the quoted price in the wake of the drop in the price of oil in international markets. Nonetheless, there is general agreement that Iranian oil, which is in principle allocated to the Syrian armed forces, constitutes an important source of support which Syria will not be prepared easily to abandon.

In a broader framework, the deterioration in Iranian military conditions or a cease fire in circumstances which are not favorable for Iran—and might be interpreted as an Iraqi "victory"—might not be in Syria's favor. In either case, Syria might find itself faced with an escalation in Iraqi influence and power and a reduction in Syrian Arab-regional influence in exchange. This will have the effect of pushing Syria toward continued adherence to its Iranian "card" in the next stage coming soon.

Syrian-Palestinian relations: It has happened that the recent Syrian-Palestinian meetings in Damascus have constituted an initial step along the road to the rectification of relations between the two parties. It appears that these meetings have yielded fruit in practical agreement on the following levels: agreement to close the book on the past and turn a new leaf in relations between the two parties, agreement to form joint committees to regulate these relations, an agreement on the release of Palestinian prisoners in Syria, agreement to seek modes of common action to support the uprising in the bank and the strip and agreement to the Algerian proposal regarding the holding of an emergency Arab summit conference next June. In the context of the peace process, it appears that the two parties have agreed to the format of the international plenipotentiary conference which has been called for and to rejection of the Shultz initiative in its present form. In addition, agreement has been reached to the formation of a unified delegation in all discussions including representatives of Syria and the PLO. In the area of bilateral relations between the two parties, agreement has been reached on the transfer of some of the PLO's departments and offices to Damascus, joint cooperation with respect to the conditions of the Palestinian camps in Lebanon and coordination in the military area as regards operations from Lebanese territories. The Palestinian party has agreed to the opening of dialogue with the organizations which have remained outside the framework of the PLO, following the national council in Algeria last year, except for the group which split off from the Fatah movement.

These agreements all in all constitute an important positive achievement, exploiting Syrian-Palestinian points of concurrence and transcending some points of difference or obscurity between them (refer to the past issue of AL-NASHRAH AL-ISTIRATIJIYAH). Perhaps

the most important likely effects of the Syrian-Palestinian reconciliation include their impact on Syrian-Jordanian relations in the stage to come. One Arab assessment holds to the theory that Syria was not totally content with the Jordanian position on the recent American diplomatic movements and the Jordanian orientation (it seems) toward pushing the United States to put pressure on Syria in exchange. In the Syrian view, the development of relations with the PLO will help limit the possibility that the organization will be drawn along by the Arab current composed of Iraq, Egypt, Jordan and Saudi Arabia, which is acting under American encouragement to tighten the blockade on Syria and increase its isolation.

In another area, it is worth mentioning the importance Syria gives to the uprising in the bank and the strip and the role of the Fatah movement in particular in managing the confrontation with Israel on the occupied territories. Syria considers that active participation is necessary in fuelling the uprising through people's movements in Golan, for example, alongside the movements in the bank and the strip, through pressure on other Arab parties to escalate their political and material support for the inhabitants on the inside, or through increasing operations coordination with the PLO.

The Syrian economic situation: Syrian economic conditions have constituted a major source of pressure on the Syrian party in recent years. According to a study recently issued by the International Monetary Fund, which deals with Syrian economic conditions up to the end of 1986, Syrian hard currency reserves were no more than \$62 million at the end of that year, while the payments of interest on the foreign civilian debt started to accumulate. According to the fund's evaluation, delayed interest to the Syrian Commercial Bank has come to about \$600 million and Syrian short and medium-term civil indebtedness has come to about \$2.6 billion. Syria's military indebtedness to the Soviet Union, which recently has started putting pressure for the payment of some of this debt through barter agreements to supply it with cotton, agricultural products and foodstuffs, has been estimated at no less than \$15 billion. This in turn has put pressure on Syria's hard currency income from exports. The current Syrian inflation rate is estimated at about 100 percent. In addition, the value of the local currency declined by about 100 percent relative to the dollar last year.

In spite of this, there are some early signs of hope arising from the increase in Syrian production of crude oil from the Dayr-al-Zawr fields, which now comes to about 100,000 barrels a day. It will be possible to double this in the course of next year. An "optimistic" report surmises that Syria's oil revenues could reach \$500 to \$700 million a year beginning the end of 1989. However, this is contingent on stabilization of the world oil price at about \$18 per barrel and Syria's continued acquisition of free oil from Iran.

Assassination of Khalil al-Wazir Reportedly Helps Mend Rift With PLO

44040221a Beirut AL-MUSTAQBAL in Arabic
23 Apr 88 p 19

[Article by Marwan al-Mahayni: "Even Through His Martyrdom Abu-Jihad [Khalil al-Wazir] Paves the Way to Damascus"]

[Text] A PLO delegation headed by martyr Khalil al-Wazir arrived in Damascus at 1450 last Tuesday, thereby resuming the course of Syrian-Palestinian joint struggle. Thus struggler Abu-Jihad achieved his great wish for which he incessantly worked during the period of estrangement between Syria and the PLO leadership since 1982 following the departure of Palestinians from Lebanon. In the view of most observers, there is no doubt that Damascus' sorrow for Khalil al-Wazir's martyrdom and Syria's reception of his body, the desire to bury him in Syrian soil after an official and popular funeral worthy of this martyr, and the welcome of all those Palestinian leaders who wished to take part in the funeral was a return to normal of Palestinian life in Syrian territory.

As soon as Damascus learned of the desire of the deceased man's family [that he be buried in Syria], Damascus sought to make sure that the martyr's funeral would turn into an act of revenge for him and a triumph of all that he worked for. It is no secret that Khalil al-Wazir was in the forefront of those who worked for healthy, sound, and close ties between Damascus and the PLO and Fatah in particular. Also it was no secret that he was the most likely person to lead the PLO delegation in Damascus and that the way was being paved for holding high-level talks to lay down the basis for ideal joint action in support of the uprising in the occupied Arab territories and continuation of the long struggle for liberation. President Hafiz al-Asad instructed all the parties concerned to ensure the entry and accommodation of all those who arrive in the country, regardless of all previous instructions. Damascus hotels made reservations for the hundreds of leaders who attended martyr al-Wazir's funeral. His body and the Fatah leaders who accompanied it were given the best reception. The leaders' meeting on Tuesday night, following the late arrival of Faruq Qaddumi and Nayif Hawatimah, focused on evaluating and reviewing the situation with Damascus. During the meeting Qaddumi had two telephone conversations, one with Syrian Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' and another with Yasir 'Arafat who was then in Libya. At this plenary meeting the consensus was to welcome President al-Asad's initiative. They considered the PLO's return to Damascus with Khalil al-Wazir's body as the country's compensation for his martyrdom, particularly since al-Wazir had a house in Damascus which will remain his and where his mother Fawziyah, his father Ibrahim, and his brother Ghalib and his family live.

A Syrian official told AL-MUSTAQBAL that by his martyrdom al-Wazir has bridged all the gaps that some mediators were secretly seeking to narrow in order to pave the way to the inevitable rapprochement between the PLO and Syria. His martyrdom has shortened the distance between the efforts and the objectives they were trying to achieve in order to develop new and sound relations between the two principal strugglers.

The question that is now being asked following the burial of the body in its last resting place in Syrian soil between southern Damascus and northern Palestine is: What does the future hold for joint action on one front and for the same objective, particularly since this new and audacious Israeli crime requires a firm and unified Arab stand that would be up to the level of the escalating Israeli challenge, as the Syrian media said on the day the crime was committed.

Obviously the celebration of martyrdom on Wednesday 20 April will be a memorable day and a landmark that will illuminate the path to the future in question. The other landmark on this path in the view of observers are the four points announced by Syria as a condition for dealing with George Shultz' settlement plan.

President al-Asad's decision in this regard during this period of difficulty is of great significance for the PLO and Syria and for the heroic uprising in the occupied territories in particular. As George Habash said on the eve of the funeral celebration: "Differences between Damascus and the PLO will not be resolved by a magic wand overnight." But the concept of Arab honor played a role in the Syrian decision which cannot be isolated from its political framework, particularly since the mere coming of the PLO and Fatah movement leadership to Damascus is considered to be a positive indication in itself.

Observers recall in this regard what Damascus often declared, that its difference with the PLO is not with or over individuals. The difference is over stands. The stands of both sides are now closer regarding the rejection of the Camp David policy and regarding direct negotiations and adherence to the Palestinian people's national rights, including their right to establish their independent state on every inch of the usurped Arab land.

13305

New Company Contributes to Food Self-sufficiency

44040021b Beirut AL-MUSTAQBAL in Arabic
23 Apr 88 pp 37-38

[Interview with Muhammad Usamah al-Daqar, a founder of al-Sham Agricultural Company, by Yasir 'Abd-Rabbuh in Damascus; date not given]

[Text] After all the talk about Syria importing grains, flour, and foodstuffs and exhausting its budget by importing basic commodities which in the past it did not

import and which in fact it exported, Syria began to move energetically and to prepare itself to dispense with imported foodstuffs. It is launching an agricultural awakening in which hard-working people such as the worker and the farmer as well as the capital of citizens with an average income, will participate. This is to be achieved through the establishment of Syrian Arab joint-stock corporations. In fact, legislative decree number 10 of 1986 was issued providing for the establishment of joint agricultural companies. Several companies have been established. These include: Ghadaq, Barakah, Nama', al-Qalamun, Sanabil, Aman and others. The most recent to be established was al-Sham Agricultural Company.

In order to shed light on this economic development, on the eve of starting the sale of al-Sham Agricultural Company stocks, AL-MUSTAQBAL met with those overseeing the establishment of the company, foremost among them Muhammad Usamah al-Daqar, a pioneer of the foodstuff industry and a founder of the company.

AL-MUSTAQBAL: Will you talk to us about the idea of establishing al-Sham Agricultural Company.

Al-Daqar: The main motivator for establishing this company was legislative decree number 10 of 1986 which has regulated the establishment of joint companies between the state and the private sector. This sector takes credit for creating incentives for those interested in agriculture among all factions of the people, whether farmers, technicians, or industrialists, and unifying their efforts in entering the world of modern agriculture in order to develop this sector so that its benefits would go both to the citizens and the state. Proceeding from this premise we, the founders, got together in order to establish this company. And so the prime minister issued decree number 492 of 1987 establishing the al-Sham Agricultural Company.

AL-MUSTAQBAL: How much is the company's capital?

Al-Daqar: Five hundred million Syrian pounds divided into 1 million shares, with each share valued at 500 Syrian pounds payable in two installments.

AL-MUSTAQBAL: Have the shares been offered for sale?

Al-Daqar: We intend to do that before the end of this month.

AL-MUSTAQBAL: What are the objectives of the al-Sham Agricultural Company?

Al-Daqar: The company aims to integrate its activities. Among its objectives is to establish modern farms for the production of strategic crops, raw material for foodstuffs industry such as cooking oil, and baby food. Among its objectives also is cattle raising, fish farming, fishing, and fish preservation and canning. It will also establish complete facilities for dairy products and develop such

products. It will also seek to manufacture veterinarian medicines, insecticides, and light agricultural machinery. Its objectives also include marketing agricultural products both inside and outside Syria.

AL-MUSTAQBAL: Does al-Sham Agricultural Company have the necessary land for its projects?

Al-Daqar: The decision establishing the company provides for the Ministry of Agriculture and Agrarian Reform to contribute 25 percent of the company's capital. This share is represented in the lands which the state offers as a contribution in kind. The Ministry of Agriculture and Agrarian Reform has in fact issued the necessary decrees allocating to the al-Sham Agricultural Company large tracts of land in various areas as a first step. The technicians of the ministry and the company are looking at new locations. This is in addition to the fact that the ministry provides us with all the facilities and the door of the minister of agriculture and agrarian reform is open to us all the time and we feel that he is anxious to hear our requests.

AL-MUSTAQBAL: Is shareholding in the company restricted to Syrian Arabs?

Al-Daqar: Citizens of Arab countries and Arab companies have the right to be shareholders. The decision establishing the company provides for giving cash incentives. The decision also includes expatriates and gives them an incentive rate.

AL-MUSTAQBAL: You mentioned that the company will adopt advanced technology. What facilities are there to obtain such technology?

Al-Daqar: The decree and the decision establishing al-Sham Agricultural Company give the company the right to import anything it needs and anything needed for its projects in terms of machinery, equipment, vehicles, and all the necessary material. In order to facilitate the company's work such imports have been exempted from all import-restricting laws, currency laws, and the requirement that imports should be only from the country of origin. Briefly, the import of such equipment has been exempted from any restrictions stipulated in current Syrian laws and regulations.

AL-MUSTAQBAL: It is not enough for agriculture or industrial agriculture to import technology in order to establish a project. What is more important is operating the project. What about the materials necessary for operating the project?

Al-Daqar: The provisions I have just mentioned have given the al-Sham Agricultural Company and other similar companies the right to import all the material necessary to operate the projects. The materials also benefit from the same allowances I have just mentioned when imported.

AL-MUSTAQBAL: Does the al-Sham Agricultural Company enjoy any other incentives?

Al-Daqar: Shareholders from the Arab countries and even Syrian expatriates have the right to transfer their dividends and proceeds from the sale of their shares (originally purchased in foreign currency) abroad in foreign currency on the basis of current rates in neighboring countries.

AL-MUSTAQBAL: What about the company's freedom to deal in foreign currency in order to operate its projects?

Al-Daqar: The company and all its affiliates have the right to open an account in foreign currency exempt from existing foreign currency regulations in Syria in order to achieve their objectives.

AL-MUSTAQBAL: Have any contacts been made with Arab citizens and Syrian expatriates in this regard?

Al-Daqar: I have visited a large number of them in Europe, America, and the Gulf states. I have sensed a desire to give preference to investment in Syria after these people have become reassured in light of legislative decree number 10 and after a large number of them have realized that capital investment is no longer confined to America and the West. Indeed such investment activity has moved to new countries such as Tunisia and Turkey, for example. This is particularly true in view of the economic shocks Arab investments abroad have suffered, the most recent of which was the collapse of the world stock market prices and the futility of investment in world stocks in the long term. So why not invest in Syria, the neighboring country beloved to all. Therefore, I have returned quite confident that a large number of Arab citizens, expatriates, and companies will participate. We are in need of foreign currency that would finance our projects just as it did in the countries that attracted Arab investments and have become production and development countries in the region, thanks to their vitality and ability to utilize idle local and foreign funds.

AL-MUSTAQBAL: Do all the shareholders from the Arab countries have the right to insure their shares?

Al-Daqar: All shareholding citizens of Arab countries have the right to insure their shares with the Arab Institute for Investment Guarantee in Kuwait.

AL-MUSTAQBAL: Do you fear any obstacles?

Al-Daqar: There are no obstacles. Decree number 10 is clear. Its benefits are not for individuals but for the people. The president is the best man to watch over the implementation of the country's laws.

AL-MUSTAQBAL: Is your company distinguished from other companies?

Al-Daqa: Everyone is making an effort to the best of their ability. Every beginning is difficult, as the saying goes. What we aim at is to introduce developed technology and to make our company a model technologically and economically and so prove to the investor our sincerity and credibility and our willingness to shoulder the responsibility placed upon us. The only distinguishing thing about our company is the variety of the founding members, which include industrialists, businessmen, engineers, employees, technicians, investors, workers, farmers, and Syrian and Arab expatriates.

13305

Writer Decries Various Forms of Conspicuous Consumption

44040236b Damascus TISHRIN 14 May 88 p 7

[Article by Rasim al-Wa'ri: "Manifestations of Luxury in the Public and Private Sectors and Their Impact on the Domestic Economy"]

[Text] Seminars, courses, recommendations and stipulations.

Everyone is talking and everyone is giving advice and guidance, but at the same time everyone forgets what he said once the dialogue of the discussion has ended. The question remains:

What is to be done in the face of growing waste in various areas of life?

Millions of Syrian pounds and thousands of tons of various materials are being wasted annually, with no justification except show.

Let us spell out some of these points and let us talk about them objectively, and we will find ourselves facing a national problem which impinges on everyone, in the public sector or in isolation, because it ultimately impinges on the domestic economy.

Within the Public Sector

The public sector has witnessed substantial development with respect to concern over manifestations of form above substance, so that it now is some people's concern that the importance of things be measured by the grandeur of the appearance. The notion of a big office rug which might cost tens of thousands at the expense of the operating installation has become widespread in government departments.

This rug is often changed, whenever someone takes the place of another person in some administrative position. This also applies to the use of the cars of the installation or organization, which must be of a model that is in keeping with status, as if responsibility were a privilege and the government must pay the tax on it to those it has put in the position of responsibility.

The talk about banquets and the cost of various receptions for greeting a visiting delegation, a board of directors' meeting or a seminar or course could go on at length. The important thing is that the reception be in the grandest of the five-star hotels so that it can be worthy of the hosting body. The result could be the rental of a hall for a number of days, costing thousands of Syrian pounds, which it might have been possible to dispense with in a government hall belonging to any union, cultural, university or people's organization. Let us say that a hotel hall is reserved for a group of individuals no more than 50 in number which can accommodate an international conference containing some hundreds of invited persons for the sake of external show which has no benefit in the foreseeable or distant future as far as the activities and results of the seminar go.

Here it is necessary to point to the cost of external form as far as buildings go. Someone observing the facade and its style might imagine that this building would have historic importance, especially in the future, but when it is completed we are surprised to find that it is a small government department and an ordinary building lacking in ornamentation.

The Private Sector

The situation in the private sector is not much different from what it is in the public sector, especially regarding the group with an unlimited income. In spite of the paucity of their number we can, however, divide them into two groups:

The group which is rich as a consequence of the means of production it owns, and the group which became rich through government work. The first group:

Its activity in commerce, industry or agriculture, in the areas of livestock and cultivation, played an important role in the attainment of wealth, and this gave it the potential for very great monthly or annual consumption, including attention to some vital matters of daily luxury in the form of buildings, parties and trips. However, this class to a very large extent continued to adhere to the importance of maintaining the goods and not spending them in a manner by which an income or interest would not be guaranteed, because this class became rich by dint of work and effort and knows full well the importance of goods, ways of preserving them and ways of spending them in ways which will realize its own interests.

The second group, which became rich through government work—this group emerged from poor or middle-income classes but found itself other sources of income, illegal for the most part, through its work in government organizations or private work on behalf of government organizations. Here the role of the "commission-takers" stands out.

Here the government's tragedy in the form of waste, spending and illogical luxury began.

Those who got rich quick had no trouble spending what they earned without thinking and probably started with their homes, spending millions of Syrian pounds on it and furnishing it with the most modern things the arts of Western pomp and international technology had come up with. More than that, the manifestations of individual luxury were applied to private projects which these groups began to establish, such as agricultural projects, constituting a group of projects which do not so much resemble productive ones as recreational ones.

A number of donums of land, the construction of a villa, a swimming pool and some trees and flowers are the sum of the project. The important thing is that millions are spent, and if the productive yield is zero, the project has been devoted to relaxation, to the spending of some time there, the holding of luxury banquets in honor of guests and the exhibition of clothes which the women of the party will wear, each one of whom will be proud that her husband has bought her a dress for such and such. The discussion could extend to soirees in large hotels. The important thing is that we stay out at parties and it is not important what we have spent, because we do not pay something we feel that we have obtained only through spiritual exertion.

Here it is necessary to mention the bridal parties which are held in these hotels; a single bridal party costs enough to meet the expenses of a whole village for a whole month.

If we add up what a person from these groups owns, and what his family owns, we will find that it does not give him the opportunity to live at this level at all.

These are examples of what one can talk about as a broad summary of the forms of waste and luxury which have become rampant in a number of groups of the society as a result of specific conditions the country has passed through, which have enabled them to acquire large incomes which they had not dreamed about in the course of their life.

You spend the thing which you have not been exhausted over without thinking, and the result is harmful to the public interest and in particular the interest of the domestic economy, since it has become a real concern, how to obtain the luxury requirements of this group, which has come to view the nation only as consisting of mutual interests—a person's interests are tied to it as far as he takes from it, and when he does not find anything to take he immediately thinks of getting out of it to other countries.

We created this class from nothing, since it grew and flourished on the sidelines of the ambitious development plans our country is embracing.

The problem lies in our protecting this class with laws and statutes and it is not possible to hold it to account for its acts and limit its irresponsible forms of conduct. The laws and statutes have become a facade, giving this parasitic class a justification to dispose of funds and finance estimated in the millions of Syrian pounds without any attempt worth mentioning to reveal the ways by which this money has been spent, especially in commercial transactions and parties for show in the form of banquets and so forth.

Therefore it is necessary to think of new formulas which will set the productive individual apart from the non-productive individual and responsibility in service to society apart from responsibility as wishes through which personal goals which are in no way connected to government work are realized. Here lies the problem. The problem is truly complex, but it is necessary to solve it. It is necessary to place a limit on individuals' spending of millions of Syrian pounds on luxury, pomp, parties, seminars, late nights, weddings, buildings, recreational projects, trips at home and abroad, the most modern types of cars and luxury goods and materials.

The have all become a heavy burden under which the domestic economy is reeling; it must in the first place be directed to the most important ingredients of our modern resurgence, embodied in productive activity in agriculture or in industry.

In the face of the difficulty of daily life, which has become the preoccupation of the ordinary citizen, while he sees some people spending without calculation and wonders:

Where do these people obtain this money to spend in this form, if salaries and wages are limited by laws and statutes, and the requirements of everyday life are constantly rising?

Some people are rich and live in incalculable luxury, and the overwhelming majority observes what is going on with its eyes and sadness and pain prompt feelings of despair in it over a situation which it never thought we would reach. However, we have reached it, and we must set forth in the proper way with serious work, and put things in their proper place, taking the interests of the citizen and the nation in the first rank of our future concerns.

11887

TUNISIA

Development of Tourist Flow From Libya Analyzed

45190051a Tunis LA PRESSE in French Apr 88 pp I-II

[Article by Hamadi Ben Salah: "Will the 1983 Performance Be Repeated?"]

[Text] Since relations were reestablished between Tunisia and Libya, cooperation between the two countries has been becoming more normal with every passing day.

A quarter of a year has already passed since that major event. Since then we have seen Tunisian workers go to Libya to work, Colonel Qadhdhafi paying a visit to Tunis, the OCT participating in the International Fair in Tripoli, after an absence of 3 years, and the large Mixed Tunisian-Libyan Commission meeting in Tripoli. And, finally, since then we have begun to see Libyan tourists in Tunisia.

The purpose of this article is not to strike a balance 3 months after the resumption of relations between Tunisia and Libya, but to analyze the profile of the Libyan visitors to Tunisia, and to attempt to quantify their importance to the Tunisian tourist sector in the course of the last 2 decades.

The number of Libyan tourists coming into the country in the month of January 1988 reached 325. At first glance, this figure may seem negligible in comparison to the number of tourists of other nationalities arriving during the same period, but it is nonetheless substantial, in particular in comparison to the number of Libyans who arrived in the course of January 1987. In fact, during that period, only 144 Libyans visited Tunisia, and thus the increase was nearly 126 percent over the reference period.

Ups and Downs

This major increase can be regarded as the harbinger of a record flow of Libyan visitors to Tunisia, which has been characterized in the course of the last 2 decades by irregularity.

In the first decade (1968-1978), Libyan tourist arrivals seesawed between a peak of 63,438 in 1974 and a low point of 10,096 in 1976.

The peak reached in 1974 was due to a gradual year-by-year increase in Libyan tourists, as well as, and above all, the excellent relations of friendship and cooperation between the two countries. It was precisely due to the deterioration in these relations 2 years after the signing of the famous Jarbah agreement that the number of Libyan tourists dropped to its lowest level in the course of the decade, when the average number of tourist arrivals was 51,000.

A study of the Libyan tourist flow in the course of the second decade (1978-1988) justifies the following comments.

—The achievement of a peak of 169,982 tourist arrivals in 1983 reflected the excellent relations existing between the two countries, which signed a number of cooperation agreements during this period, the most important perhaps being that pertaining to the establishment of a mixed investment bank.

—The existence of a "first low point" in 1980, in which year only 4,225 Libyans visited Tunisia, was explained by the attack made on the city of Qafsa by an armed commando unit from Libya. The return to normal following this event did not begin until 1981.

—The existence of a "second low point" in 1986, in which year only 3,871 Libyans came into our country, was explained by the political crisis in which the two countries were involved in 1985. It culminated in the repatriation of the Tunisian workers in Libya and the breakdown of diplomatic relations between the two countries, as well as the closing of the frontier.

The conclusion to be derived from this analysis is that there is undeniably a very close relationship between the Libyan tourist flow and the status of the political relations between the two countries. To a much greater extent than any other clientele, Libyan tourists seem in all instances to obey a "slogan," which either encourages them to visit Tunisia or discourages them from doing so.

Short Overnight Stays

At first glance, we might think that the overnight stays would follow the same curve as the number of tourists in both decades.

A study of the figures available to the ONTT reveals certain peculiarities.

In the course of the decade between 1968 and 1978, overnight stays did follow the same curve as the number of visitors, but the peak, however, occurred in 1978 instead of 1974, with 123,010 overnight stays. The low point, on the other hand, which occurred in 1976 for tourists entering the country, also occurred in the same year for overnight stays, of which there were only 15,380, with 10,096 visitors coming in.

The average stay during that decade ranged between 1 and 2 days in 1978.

During the decade between 1978 and 1988, overnight stays, like the number of tourists entering the country, experienced ups and downs. The drop in tourists arriving in 1980 was reflected in a decline in the number of overnight stays, with a total of only 5,827. Similarly, the second drop in arriving tourists in 1986 was reflected in a decline in overnight stays, of which there were only 1,968. The increase seen in arriving tourists in 1983, for its part, was followed by a spectacular increase in overnight stays, which came to a total of 350,799.

The average length of a tourist stay in the course of this decade varied between 0.5 days in 1986 and 2.1 days in 1982.

In the light of this analysis, it can be seen that 1986 was the worst year, because all of the parameters were at their lowest points. The best year, on the other hand, was undeniably 1983.

But unfortunately, not even all of these figures give us an exact idea of the profile of the Libyan client, apart from the instability we have seen. Thus an examination and study of other factors is required.

In this connection, we have studied tables showing the means of transport used by Libyans traveling to Tunisia. A comparison of these tables for the past 2 decades shows that Libyans travel primarily by road, with air travel in second place, and maritime travel third and last.

In 1983, to mention just one example, 138,407 out of the 169,972 Libyan tourists arriving came by road, 28,675 arrived by air, and only 2,800 came by ship.

If we combine the short average stay with the heavy influx by road, we could make the general statement that the Libyan tourist is content to visit the southern part of the country—Madanin, Qabis, Tawzar, Jarbah and Safaqis, which can be regarded as the farthest limit, because of the great distance separating it from the Ras Jedir frontier point.

On another level, we noted that the Libyan tourists generally come in the high season. Their preference is clear, and it can be verified that it holds true each year. Let us again take the example of 1983. We noted that of the 169,982 tourists coming in, 121,637 did so in the high season, and only 48,345 came during the off season. The ratio then is three fourths in the high season and one fourth in the off season.

In the light of all of these factors, we can define the profile of the Libyan tourist as follows. He prefers the high season, travels by road, and nine times out of 10, stays in a hotel, although the category cannot be established precisely, because this information is not available to the ONTT. The only study we consulted pertains to overnight stays by Libyans in the month of August 1980. Now that year cannot be regarded as a "normal" year because of the differences between the two countries at that time, which led to the drop in the number of arrivals with which we are familiar.

The question remains as to whether the Libyan client is a heavy spender.

If we rely on an average payment of 37.7 dinars for an overnight stay in 1983, we find that Libyan customers paid bills in Tunisia totaling about 13 million dinars in 1983.

For 1988, since relations between Tunisia and Libya have returned to normal, we are justified in hoping for a record influx of Libyan tourists, with the number exceeding that for 1983. We also have good reason to think that income will be higher, because each Libyan visiting Tunisia, we believe, has the right to exchange 300 Libyan pounds, or in other words, the equivalent of 800 Tunisian dinars.

In any case, Libyan tourists are creating a new trade dynamic in the southern regions, thanks to their purchases of Tunisian products.

5157

Trade Deficit Declines by 5.6 Percent in January, February

45000098 *London AL-HAWADITH in Arabic*
3 Jun 88 p 56

[Text] The Tunisian trade balance deficit fell by 5.6 percent during the first two months of this year, and it was reduced by 146.1 million dinars from the same period last year to 137.5 million dinars. In contrast to the shrinking trade balance deficit, the increase of Tunisian exports registered during the first two months of this year exceeded by 20 percent the amount of exports during the first two months of last year.

UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

Soviets Reportedly Ready To Boost Trade Links

44000088b *Dubayy GULF NEWS in English*
3 Mar 88 p 11

[Text] Abu Dhabi—An all-out push by the Soviet Union to boost trade with the UAE is in the pipeline. Details of the programme have been unveiled by the Soviet Ambassador to the UAE, Felix N. Fedotov in the magazine, PETROLEUM INDUSTRY.

In the interview, the ambassador admitted that commercial and economic relations between the two countries are in their embryo stage but he added that moves were afoot to strengthen and seal the ties. Trade delegations from the Soviet Union he said, have begun to visit the UAE with the aim of establishing agencies while businessmen from UAE are now touring the Soviet Union investigating trade opportunities there.

One of the main fields of expansion, said the ambassador, will be tourism. Soviet tourists, he said, were already coming to the UAE following the setting up of air links between the two countries. The numbers of tourists, he said, should be increased substantially over the coming years.

But there was also to be full scale promotion in the fields of commerce and general economy. Major changes in the economic policies with the Soviet Union, he said, meant

that goods from the country could now play a competitive role in the Gulf market. In addition, he added, talks were already underway with an aim of establishing joint projects between the two countries. Some of the projects, said the ambassador, are concentrated on the oil and gas industries, of which both countries are producers.

The Soviet Union is particularly interesting in learning from the UAE's experience in developing high technology production from its oil and gas fields. In addition, said the ambassador, the Soviet Union is anxious to develop solid understandings between itself and the OPEC member countries in a bid to preserve and stabilise oil prices.

Recently the Saudi oil minister visited the Soviet Union and the two sides agreed upon a unified policy relating to oil prices. A similar agreement has been signed between the Soviet Union and Kuwait, according to the ambassador, and he said, the Soviet Union and the UAE were hoping to join forces in a like agreement soon. He added that at present studies were being undertaken to examine the possibility of lifting oil from the waters around the Soviet Union's coast.

At present, goods from the Soviet Union reach the UAE market via a third party country but the ambassador said it was hoped that in the near future direct import links to the UAE ports would be set up. The main market for Soviet goods, he said, was in the fields of air conditioning, furnishings and the Lada car agency due to soon be opened in Dubayy.

/9274

Imports From Malaysia Show Major Increase
44000099 Abu Dhabi EMIRATES NEWS in English
4 May 88 p 3

[Excerpts] Dubayy: Exports from the South East Asian federation of Malaysia to the UAE more than doubled last year compared to the 1986 figure, according to the Malaysian trade promotion office in Dubayy.

The 1987 figure was U.S.\$37.7 million, compared to U.S.\$18.2 million in 1986, a rise of nearly 107 percent.

Over the same period, the UAE's exports to Malaysia fell from U.S. \$4.9 million to U.S. \$1.9 million. Unlike many of the UAE's Far Eastern trading partners, Malaysia is a net oil exporter, and imports no oil from the Gulf. Its imports from the UAE are mainly aluminium ingots from the DUBAL plant at Jabal 'Ali.

UAE imports from Malaysia, which represent less than one percent of Malaysia's total exports, have traditionally been confined to palm oil, used for cooking, timber and plywood.

A spokesman for the trade office said yesterday, however, that last year had seen a welcome breakthrough for manufactured items. Among these, he noted, had been gold jewellery, steel furniture and fire extinguishers.

One other product destined for the UAE market is the locally-made Proton Saga car, which should be introduced once an agency agreement has been finalised.

The Malaysian official ascribed last year's substantial increase in trade to the "aggressive trade promotion efforts" undertaken by his Government. Noting that Trade and Industry Minister Rafidah 'Aziz, who visited the UAE late last year, would pay another visit before the end of 1988, he added "the Malaysian Government is pushing our exporters to come to look at the Middle East in general, and at the Gulf market in particular."

A considerable number of Malaysian companies are also taking part in private exhibitions in the UAE, he said, such as the al-Shariqah EXPO Fair, and the recent Far East'88 show in Dubayy.

Malaysian goods are currently good value in the UAE, the spokesman noted, since its currency has not been subject to the gyrations of those in the industrialised world.

"Our currency is stable—and at the moment our prices are very competitive, helping UAE importers who wish to buy from Malaysia."

/9604

Official Estimates Oil Reserves Will Last 90 Years
44000087 Dubayy KHALEEJ TIMES in English
4 May 88 p 11

[Excerpt] Oil reserves in the UAE will last for 90 years at the present production rate of one million barrels per day, an Abu Dhabi National Oil Company (Adnoc) official said.

This puts the estimated oil reserves in the country at 32.8 billion brrels.

Hassan Ahmed Al Marzouqi, director of the trade analysis section at Adnoc and chairman of the UAE Economists and Businessmen Society, said in a lecture at the society that the UAE had so far produced 15 billion barrels.

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1987 Statistics Show Rise in Dubayy's Exports
44000088a Dubayy GULF NEWS in English
3 Mar 88 p 12

[Text] Dubayy (WAM)—Dubayy's non-oil exports rose from Dh. 1,288 million in 1986 to Dh. 1,318 million last year, according to Dubayy Government statistics.

The Emirate's re-export trade last year totaled Dh. 5.34 billion against Dh. 4.43 billion in 1986.

Japan topped the countries which imported from Dubayy last year with Dh. 404.7 million followed by the United States (Dh. 169 million), Saudi Arabia (Dh. 84.5 million), Oman (Dh. 84 million), Kuwait (Dh. 78 million), Taiwan (Dh. 65 million), Qatar (Dh. 60.3 million), South Korea (Dh. 57.3 million), Bahrain, (Dh. 53.2 million) and Pakistan (Dh. 41.7 million).

Iran was the top importer of Dubayy's re-exports with Dh. 1,205 million followed Saudi Arabia (Dh. 654 million), Qatar (Dh. 360 million), Kuwait (Dh. 343.2 million), West Germany (Dh. 230.8 million), United Kingdom (Dh. 201.7 million), the United States (Dh. 192.1 million), India (Dh. 150 million), Tanzania (Dh. 124.5 million), Pakistan (Dh. 121 million), North Yemen (Dh. 83 million), Switzerland (Dh. 77 million) and Japan (Dh. 76 million).

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**PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC
OF YEMEN**

Soviets To Undertake Irrigation Project
44000103 London MEED in English 27 May 88 p 31

[Excerpt] The Soviet Union's *Selkhozpromexport* understood to have won the first major contract to be let on the Wadi Hajr irrigation scheme. The order, signed with the Agrarian & Agricultural Reform Ministry covers an estimated 3,800 hectares in the Lower Hajr region. The project calls for the improvement of farmland in the Wadi Hajr area, 400 kilometres east of Aden, and the replacement of irrigation systems damaged by flooding.

Selkhozpromexport's job entails building two overflow-type diversion weirs, coupled with two feeder canals, 17 and 21 kilometres long. Rehabilitation and modernisation of the surface drainage canal system is planned, with the provision of associated drainage for 835 hectares of perennially irrigated and 482 hectares of spate-irrigated land. Experimental subsurge drainage is to be laid over 40 hectares.

Other work includes secondary canals, storage facilities and improvement of a 70 kilometre unpaved road linking the area to the Aden to Mukalla highway.

The scope of the contract, for which bids were received in October 1987, is limited to the lower Hajr area. Tenders for work in the upper Hajr are likely to be called within 12 months (MEED 3:10:87).

The scheme is financed by the Kuwait-based Arab Fund for Economic & Social Development (AFESD). AKD 3.5 million (\$12.4 million) loan, agreed more than three years ago, is repayable over 18 years, including five years' grace, with interest at 4 percent.

The Wadi Harj project is part of a long-term scheme to upgrade agricultural production in the area. The upper Hajr project aims to improve water management to allow increased food output. The main crops in the area are water melons, sweet potatoes, onions, millet and sesame. North Korea undertook work to improve irrigation in the area in the early 1970s, but the project was not completed (MEED 13:7:85).

The present scheme is based on designs drawn up by a Hungarian joint venture of Tesco and Viziter Consulting Engineering Company between 1982-84.

/9738

Official Gives Estimates of Oil Statistics

44000109 Dubayy AL-BAYAN in Arabic 19 May 88

[Text] Salih Abu-Bakr ibn-Husaynun, deputy prime minister and minister of energy and minerals of the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen, announced that his country's oil reserves in the Shabwah field amount to 500 million tons. However, the quantity of present production is limited to what can be transported via tanker trucks, 20 to 30 of which are available per day. In a statement which he made yesterday to the Kuwaiti paper *AL-SIYASAH*, he added that the development of the Shabwah field project, which the Soviet Union finances, will cost 70 million rubles. He indicated that the PDRY's oil imports in 1987 were valued at 30 million dinars and that oil consumption in that year was 20 percent less than it was in 1985, thanks to guidelines for energy consumption.

YEMEN ARAB REPUBLIC

Company Wins Concession To Drill in Alif Field
44000096 Dubayy KHALEEJ TIMES in English
5 May 88 p 11

[Text] International Petroleum Corporation (IPC) has won an important 4,300 square kilometres (in excess of one million acres) oil concession in the Yemen Arab Republic according to Lukas H. Lundin, vice-president Exploration.

The cabinet approved the production sharing agreement between IPC's wholly-owned subsidiary, International Petroleum (Bermuda) Limited, and the Yemen Ministry of Oil and Mineral Resources relating to the Upper Wadi al-Jawf acreage, 70km north-east of San'a, close to the town of Ma'rib.

Ratification by the People's Assembly is expected to be given soon.

IPC will conduct field geology and seismic operations, followed by a programme of exploratory drilling Mr Lundin said in a press statement released here.

The concession is situated within the Ma'rib-Jawf Graben. This unique and outstanding oil-producing basin was only revealed recently, when Hunt Oil Company drilled the Alif-1 discovery well in 1984.

To date, over 60 producing wells have been drilled on the Alif Field alone, and recoverable reserves are now estimated at over 500 million barrels of oil.

In addition, further discoveries have followed and the amount of oil discovered has warranted the construction of a 423km pipeline to the Red Sea. This pipeline began flowing at a rate of 135,000 barrels of oil per day in December 1987, and will increase in stages to 200,000 barrels of oil per day during 1988.

/9604

Expectations of Oil Discovery Reportedly Trigger Increased Debt

44000104 London MEED in English 13 May 88 p 32

[Text] The prospect of becoming a significant oil exporter has already begun to affect Yemen's economic policy. Tight fiscal strategies were abandoned in 1987 after four years of rigorous spending restraint, marked by determined efforts to limit growth in the budget and stop all but essential imports. But a rising tide of imports has produced a larger than expected current account deficit; foreign borrowing and spending have risen substantially. The trend, set to continue in 1988 with a further easing in import controls, will only be partly offset by oil export revenues.

The shift in financial policy is driving the overall deficit back to levels deemed unacceptable in the early 1980s, when it approached 30 percent of gross domestic product (GDP). Foreign financing, mostly through the provision of supplier credits, rose sixfold in 1987 to YR3,250 million (\$361 million). Domestic bank financing doubled to about YR6,200 million, or nearly 20 percent of the money supply. The overall fiscal deficit is estimated at 22 percent of GDP in 1987, in sharp contrast to the level just 12 months earlier. Inflation in 1987 was 22 percent.

Oil

Exports began in the last week of December 1987. Earnings could exceed \$500 million by the end of 1988 on production of 175,000 barrels a day (b/d) and prices at \$18 a barrel. About half present output is marketed by the government in a quarterly bid round, with prices linked to a five-day average of Brent and Dubai crudes. The balance goes to the operating company and its equity partners for cost recovery. Production is so far limited to two fields near Marib, but could rise to 225,000 b/d, the current capacity of the export pipeline.

Activity is still focused on the basin in the southwest of the concession operated by the U.S.' Hunt Oil. Further development of the area is clouded by the rise in tension with South Yemen, now starting to develop oil discoveries in the adjacent Shabwa region. Hunt believes the basin extends outside the Marib/Jawf concession, possibly into the contested border area. Other oil prospects are not encouraging. Both Hunt and another American firm, Exxon Corporation, have drilled dry wells in new areas, offshore Hodeidah and in the central highlands near Dhamar, respectively. Plans for further probes are not being vigorously pursued. France's Total (Compagnie Francaise des Petroles), in partnership with the U.S.' Texaco, is set to drill in the southern Tihama later in 1988. A planned liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) bottling plant is the only immediate project to exploit the enormous gas reserves.

Balance of payments

The 1987 current account deficit of \$631 million was a stunning reverse after the low of \$149 million in 1986. Imports surged to \$1,478 million from \$1,034 million. Government imports more than doubled to \$565 million, while private-sector imports were up by nearly 30 percent. Some of the growth in official imports was exceptional spending for the oil sector and lavish 25th anniversary celebrations in September. Commodity shortages and low industrial activity prompted an easing in the private-sector import regime.

Nevertheless, the public sector is widening its role in the economy and drawing on external finance. Development and commodity loans were up to \$472 million, compared with about \$141 million in 1986. Supplier credits doubled to around \$265 million. Short and medium-term loan repayments rose, as did the debt service ratio. It now stands at 24 percent of current receipts, analysts say.

Traditionally volatile remittances exceeded expectations to total \$863 million, attributable in part to exchange rate appreciation at the start of the year. Despite the rise in payments, the invisible account returned a \$792 million surplus.

Exchange rates

The central bank has moved progressively to control the foreign exchange market since the closure of unofficial money changers in 1987. The commercial bank rate has appreciated and was fixed at \$1 = YR9.75 in late 1987. Further adjustments to bring it in line with the official rate of \$1 = YR9.00 are favoured. The easing of credit restrictions and the lowering of interest rates could fuel demand for hard currency, which is in severe shortage. This may foreshadow a limited, and officially tolerated, revival of the black market.

Money and finance

The IMF estimates real growth of 5 percent in 1987, aided by good agricultural conditions and increased imports. Growth would have been higher had credit restrictions not held monetary expansion to 10 percent by depressing bank lending. Commercial bank deposits with the central bank are close to double the statutory requirement, indicating a very low use of funds. Recently announced cuts in interest rates should reduce the banks' high liquidity and boost investment. The authorities have relaxed the rules governing the opening of letters of credit and set higher targets for spending on imports in 1988.

Budget

The gap between actual and budgeted spending is widening, with outgoings in 1987 rising by 45 percent. The government made backdated pay awards and resorted to increased borrowings. Revenues rose by 5 percent, but fell well below target. Despite the rise in imports and increased duties, customs receipts actually fell as many imports were admitted tax-free. The official budget sets overall spending this year at YR11,833 million, but this is a poor indicator of real spending. Without a dramatic improvement in domestic revenue raising, the appetite for local and foreign borrowing is likely to increase.

Outlook

The impact of oil earnings is proving to be modest. Grant and remittances held up well in 1987, but can no longer be relied on to cover a widening trade gap. The surge in imports is tarnishing the authorities' hard-won reputation for prudent spending restraint. Official import ceilings for 1988 are higher and will probably be exceeded. Taking full account of oil-related revenues, they anticipate an even greater reliance on foreign loans and supplier credits. The latter will pose cumulative payments problems because of their short and medium-term maturity. The government, obliged to some extent to meet popular expectations of prosperity, is pinning much hope on further oil discovery and their rapid development. Without such a boost, the debt service requirements could prove unmanageable. Ultimately, a return to the tight fiscal policy pursued until last year looks inevitable. The authorities have previously shown themselves flexible and adroit at applying deflationary policies. Politically, another dose of the same medicine could prove much more difficult to apply in the oil era.

North Yemen: balance of payments, 1985-88 (\$ million)

	1985	1986	1987	1988 ¹
Trade Account				
Exports	10	21	55	525
Imports	1,238	1,034	1,478	1,800
Deficit	1,228	1,013	1,423	1,275
Invisible account				
Receipts, of which	1,183	1,244	1,223	1,200
Remittances	866	794	863	750
Payments	294	379	432	650
Surplus	889	864	792	550
Current account deficit	339	149	631	725

¹MEED forecast
Based on Central Bank of Yemen figures
/9738

AFGHANISTAN

Thousands Reported Secretly Imprisoned

46400138 Tehran RESALAT in Persian 12 May 88 p 8

[Text] The intelligence organization of the regime of Afghanistan has twelve secret prisons in Kabul in which at least 25,000 political prisoners are being held. Also, 35,000 other people are imprisoned in Afghanistan's largest prison in Kabul named Pol-e Charkhi. The crime of the majority of these people was their participation in political activities against the Marxist regime of Afghanistan. An Afghan student who escaped from the Pol-e Charkhi prison after spending five years there stated the above in an interview with an IRNA reporter, and added: Pol-e Charkhi prison has 93 parts and the Soviet advisers are the principal decisionmakers for the future of the prisoners; various methods of torture are used on the prisoners, one third of whom are awaiting to be sentenced.

According to the Afghan student, the health and nutritional conditions of the prisoners in the prison were very abominable. He said the prisoners' blood was used to treat the soldiers injured during the war with the Mujahidin.

PAKISTAN

Policy on Law and Order Termed 'Flawed'

46000146 Karachi DAWN in English 16 May 88 p 5

[Text] When peace and public order is torn to shreds by frequent eruptions of large-scale violence, the problem no longer remains one of simple law and order to be tackled by routine police and administrative methods. This is precisely how what Karachi has been going through for the past few years must be viewed: a syndrome of violence rather than a strong of sporadic incidents. And because it is so, it is incumbent on all sections of opinion, communities, groups, institutions and even individuals to join in a concerted move to restore peace and harmony. One cannot, in these tumultuous circumstances, take refuge behind a business-as-usual attitude. But such a drive has to be born of a serious resolve on the part of the administration to deal with the festering problem in a resolute, impartial and carefully planned manner. In that sense, the Sind Chief Minister Mr Akhtar Ali G. Kazi took the right step when he invited representatives of the various political parties and leaders of opinion to discuss the law and order situation in Karachi and to devise a consensual approach to coming to grips with it. The many divides that have been etched into the city's social structure and community relations demands a new healing and restorative process based on mutual understanding and shared affinities. The ethnic dimensions of Karachi's syndrome of violence and strike call for a collective approach and effort to contain the forces of hatred and anarchy which have played havoc with the peace and security of the

city. But, unfortunately, the way to the chief minister's highly promising broader unity move was allowed to be blighted with some procedural and bureaucratic laws. Some leading opposition parties were kept from attending the meeting by the careless manner in which the proposal was put forward and invitations extended. It was wholly unnecessary, indeed inappropriate, to expect the leaders of the parties to attend Saturday's meeting convened by the chief minister in their personal capacity. Obviously, these leaders were meant to be present at the meeting not just to be briefed on what the government planned to do, but to give their own points of view on the law-and-order situation in the city and commit the support of their respective parties to a common strategy for dealing with it. Any initiative in this respect would be meaningless unless a mobilization of ideas and active efforts of this sort was aimed at. The most striking aspect of the hurriedly organised meeting was the fact that the commissioner was left to convey the invitations on telephone. This again was a tactical lapse on the part of a political government which is expected to be circumspect about using the bureaucratic channel to reach the people or to transmit its political message. One is reminded, in this context, of the approach adopted by the prime minister in bringing leaders of the opposition together to discuss the Afghan issue during the crucial run-up to the Geneva agreement. It was a successful initiative largely because the method adopted for convening the meeting was flawless. Federal ministers were deputized personally to carry the invitation to the various invitees and to persuade them to attend the conference.

In any case, the meeting called by the chief minister of Sind was only a partial success. It did, however, allow the chief minister to seek the advice and viewpoints of a fairly wide spectrum of opinion and community interests, including some known antagonists in Karachi's recurring trouble. A report of deliberations also underlines the fact that some of the most vital issues relating to the growth of disharmony in Karachi were freely raised. The chief minister himself conceded that the system of policing in Karachi had become obsolete. He was conscious of the seeds of Karachi's disorder when he said that his government would do everything to meet the basic civic needs and expectations of the people. The participants included, among others, the Mohajir Qaumi Movement and the Punjabi Pakhtoon Ittehad. But Karachi's problems cannot entirely be seen in the mirror of its ethnic divide. A major role still belongs to the national political parties. Karachi cannot but be conceived as an integral part of the country's polity and economy. Indeed, disturbances in the city reflect, in so small measure, the wider distortions, moods and attitudes that have been fostered by a long period of Martial Law. These can be corrected and the wilted spirit of unity and harmony reinvigorated only with the help of national parties reasserting their unifying role and erasing the virulence of the ethnic and regionalist forces by absorbing them in their composite ranges or neutralising them altogether. As we have said the idea of inviting all parties

and prominent individuals to discuss the Karachi situation was commendable. But much of its constructive potential was allowed to be lost by default. However, it would be worth making another try at bringing the leaders of political parties, major interests and communities together to form a common front against the forces of disruption and violence in this city and to launch a major initiative towards eliminating tension and strife. It should not take very long for such an undertaking to materialise. Karachi needs not only a meaningful dialogue but also a definite commitment on the part of all its political factions and communities, so that the great task of restoring civic sanity, peace and harmony and resuming the interrupted process of growth becomes a shared concern of the entire community.

/12232

Benazir Bhutto Calls for Ziaul Haq's Resignation
46040009a London AL-DUSTUR in Arabic
25 Apr 88 pp 11, 12

[Interview with opposition figure Benazir Bhutto: "I Am Demanding Ziaul Haq's Resignation"]

[Text] AL-DUSTUR held this interview with Benazir Bhutto, leader of the Pakistani People's Party, during the visit she made to the British capital recently, in participation with the British Channel Four. This interview dealt with controversial issues, the most conspicuous of which included the Geneva agreement on Afghanistan and internal conditions in Pakistan. AL-DUSTUR completed this interview with Miss Benazir Bhutto, who is now in southern France, by telephone, in order to shed light on the issue of the terrible explosions which occurred recently in the capital, Islamabad, and Rawalpindi and Lahore.

[Question] You were among those who supported the call for the pursuit of negotiations to find a solution to the Afghan issue. What is your evaluation of the agreement which was concluded in this regard in Geneva?

[Answer] We had been requesting a political settlement to this conflict. Everyone has greeted with satisfaction the news related to the Soviet withdrawal, although the real results of this agreement will be apparent later. The questions which arise regarding this agreement are the following: will the refugees return to their country, will the disturbances in Afghanistan extend to Pakistan, and will some elements loyal to Kabul remain in Afghanistan to disrupt its stability?

[Question] This is supposed to be a peace agreement, but as long as the two superpowers are still feeding the flames of this war and helping the parties facing one another, it seems as if this war will not end.

[Answer] Let us first of all closely examine the sections of this agreement. The United States has got what it wants, that is, Soviet withdrawal and the continued provision of

aid to its allies. Therefore Washington is satisfied with this agreement. As regards the Soviet Union, changes have occurred in its original demands regarding the halt to foreign acts of interference in Afghanistan. Although these acts of interference will continue, Moscow has decided to withdraw because domestic issues, such as the process of reforming Soviet society, assume priority as far as it is concerned.

What was Pakistan's yield from this agreement? We have not obtained a cease fire and there are no guarantees regarding the return of the refugees, while the specter of civil war continues to loom in Afghanistan.

[Question] But doesn't Pakistan receive significant American aid?

[Answer] Yes, we have received American aid for some time, but if the civil war continues and the drain of refugees to Pakistan continues, who will meet the cost of their staying among us? In my opinion, international interest will decline following the withdrawal of the Soviets, and I am certain that Pakistan let itself miss a precious opportunity in Geneva. A year ago, I said that Pakistan must test Soviet intentions and request a clarification of the features of the transitional stage. How will the return of the refugees be carried out? However, Ziaul Haq insisted on demanding that the Soviets leave Afghanistan, and gave no attention to these issues I referred to above.

[Question] Do you believe that Ziaul Haq was wrong in signing this agreement?

[Answer] We are in favor of the agreement, but we have wasted much time. Ziaul Haq wasted more than a year after Gorbachev announced his readiness to withdraw from Afghanistan and put a limit to this "wound which is draining blood," as he put it.

[Question] What are the reasons which in your opinion prompted Ziaul Haq to sign this agreement now, while he had declared his rejection of it a month ago?

[Answer] The Pakistani regime's policy is characterized by shortsightedness. He believed that the Soviet Union would remain forever in Afghanistan and that the aid it received would go on forever. When the regime discovered that Moscow had resolved on the decision to withdraw, it was left with no other option but to join the negotiations underway in Geneva, in a pro forma manner. What has Pakistan got? It has not got anything, in regard to the cease fire, the end to the civil war or guarantees related to the return of the refugees.

[Question] Do you believe that the United States is in the right when it continues to offer aid to Pakistan and support Ziaul Haq's regime?

[Answer] That is the question. What is the purpose of providing this aid? If the purpose is to strengthen the regime, that is wrong, in my opinion. However, if the American aid is aimed at the development of Pakistan and tied to respect for human rights and the implantation of democracy in the society, I welcome this sort of approach.

[Question] If you are elected president of Pakistan, in view of the observations you have expressed on American aid, to what country will you turn to receive aid?

[Answer] Relations between Pakistan and the United States are deep rooted, and the issue is not related to the aid in itself but rather to whom this aid is offered. We hope that this aid will not be support for the dictatorship.

[Question] Within your party, you are facing some problems. Some personnel have submitted their resignations. There are people who say that these people's resignation may be attributed to your position of fealty to the United States.

[Answer] My position is not one of fealty to America.

[Question] You or at least your party embraced the socialist platform and the people believe that you have renounced these principles.

[Answer] I would like to correct some information.

Our party's basic principles are the following: Our economy is socialist, democracy in political life, and Islam is our belief.

[Question] Wasn't your father, may God have mercy on him, a socialist?

[Answer] My father was a democratic socialist. He never was a Marxist. I do not understand why some people criticize me because I am pursuing a policy which has been followed previously by many democratic socialist parties. In this regard, it is necessary to point out that even Mr Gorbachev is now orienting himself toward the United States and building bridges with it. If there has been no objection to Gorbachev's conduct, why should there be an objection to the social democratic parties when they behave in the same way? I consider myself a democratic socialist.

[Question] There are other personnel inside your party who accuse you of abandoning the political options your father called for and of starting to draw close to Ziaul Haq's regime.

[Answer] There is no common denominator between our party's orientations and Ziaul Haq's regime. They are engaging in dictatorship and we believe in democracy. They believe in the need to prohibit trade union activity and we do not believe in that. We have a comprehensive

program for employing our people, and they are prepared to give permanent legitimacy to a policy which includes the need to accept unemployment. They are pursuing a policy of discrimination against women and other minorities, while we are opposed to that. There therefore is a vast difference between our party's orientations and those of Ziaul Haq's regime. As regards the army's interference in political life, we do not believe in that, as they do. We believe in the democratic society, freedom of the judiciary and the freedom of the press. Therefore there is nothing which brings us together with Ziaul Haq's regime.

[Question] If you are against the method by which Ziaul Haq rules, why did you take part in the elections which took place last year?

[Answer] Ziaul Haq has claimed that he wants to implant democratic foundations and he appointed a civilian as prime minister. We sensed that therefore as long as we did not test these intentions we could not expose them and reveal the fraud they entailed, on top of our not wanting to drag our party toward extremism so that it would become a party that "prattles" and has no actual influence.

We profited greatly from our participation in the elections. We discovered the areas in which the processes of fraud and deceit are carried out, and our participation was an opportunity to train our personnel in political action and implant the traditions of proper democracy in our country. Now, thanks to that participation, the process of retreating and going back to dictatorship has become a very difficult matter.

[Question] However, your party realized only modest results during these elections. When you went back to Pakistan in 1986, you represented great hope as far as the Pakistani opposition went. Don't you believe that you currently do not represent a real opposition to the regime?

[Answer] I do not share this view with you. First of all, with respect to the results of the elections, we were allowed to participate in the elections only in 60 percent of the districts because our candidates were rejected in 40 percent of the districts.

Therefore we now say, what guarantees are there that the coming elections will take place in a suitable atmosphere which will allow the opposition to participate? In the electoral districts where our party was allowed to nominate its representatives, the locations of the ballot boxes were changed.

[Question] Then why did you take part in these elections and impart a form of legitimacy to them?

[Answer] If we had not participated in these elections we would not have been able to reveal these forms of deceit. Then why do you want us to leave the stage to Ziaul Haq's men, allow them to control electoral districts, and consequently neglect the people who believe in democ-

rary? It is true that our boycott of the elections in 1983 and 1985 revealed that they were fraudulent, but this boycott did not prevent Ziaul Haq from continuing to train political personnel. One should bear in mind that such political personnel had not existed before. Our boycott also created a vacuum for the opportunistic religious figures to occupy the stage. These political personnel are now sponsored by Ziaul Haq. Through our participation in the elections, we managed to confront the regime's candidates and we are now demanding guarantees with respect to the coming elections. If our candidates are not permitted to carry out their election campaign, and if the polling places are shifted, the elections will not be free. Thus we will participate in the elections only if they are free and democratic.

[Question] Some people make the accusation in your regard that yours will be a one-woman rule, like Mrs Thatcher's.

[Answer] Mrs Thatcher won three elections. So this is not a bad model. However, when the citizen cannot criticize the ruler's policy, that is a disaster.

[Question] Do you see yourself as president of Pakistan?

[Answer] It is the Pakistani people who choose their government. As far as I am concerned, I am fighting with full force for the sake of democracy. I hope that Pakistan will turn into a democratic country and I will continue with the struggle until Pakistan becomes democratic.

[Question] My final question is related to the contradictory news that is being bruited about concerning the entity which stands behind the latest explosions which occurred in Islamabad and Rawalpindi. What information do you have on this subject?

[Answer] The source of this contradictory news is Gen Ziaul Haq himself. He sometimes declares that the explosions which occurred in Rawalpindi and Islamabad are in effect a chance incident, and sometimes he declares that there is a possibility that they were a result of an act of sabotage. Such interpretations cannot slake one's thirst. It is necessary immediately to form a committee of investigation which will review the circumstances in which these explosions took place and the causes which lie behind this laxity and indifference towards citizens' safety, because the arms depots were present in residential areas. In this regard we demand Gen Ziaul Haq's resignation, because he was responsible for this massacre to which a number of innocent people succumbed.

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